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THE INDIAN ARCHIVES

JANUARY—DECEMBER

1956

Volume X

Numbers 1-2

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A LETTER FROM JOHN STEWART, SECRETARY AND JUDGE ADVOCATE OF BENGAL, 1773

AMONG the papers of the second Marquess of Rockingham, statesman and patron of Edmund Burke, which have been deposited by Lord FitzWilliam in the Sheffield Public Library¹, there is a lively account of his impressions of Bengal written by one John Stewart, dated 7 March 1773. The account gives evidence of an alert and somewhat journalistic intelligence rather than of any depth of insight or knowledge, but it is a good illustration of the impact of the country on an educated Briton of his day, and contains two features of special interest—its writer was closely associated with Warren Hastings in his first years as Governor of Bengal; and, since Stewart was intimate with Edmund Burke², the latter is likely to have read this letter at a time when his contacts with and interest in Bengal were still very limited.

John Stewart was a Scottish adventurer, a relative it would seem of Archibald Stewart, wine merchant of York Buildings, Buckingham Street, the Jacobite Provost of Edinburgh in 1745, and his son another John Stewart³, who was active in the affairs of the East India Company in the 1760's and early 1770's as the 'jackal' of Sir George Colebrooke, one of the leading figures in the Court of Directors⁴. In 1771, through the influence of Colebrooke, Stewart was appointed Judge Advocate of Bengal with the reversion to the Secretaryship⁵, and went out with a personal recommendation to Hastings, whom he accompanied to Bengal. He owed his appointment to Sir George Colebrooke, and

1. I am indebted to the Earl FitzWilliam and the Trustees of the Wentworth-Woodhouse estate for permission to make use of and print this document.

2. See letters in the FitzWilliam MSS. (Sheffield).

3. The first trace so far found of him is in 1761 when his address was York Buildings (Royal Society of Arts, Subscription Book). There were at least four men named John Stewart or Stuart at this time concerned in East India affairs, and their identification presents considerable difficulty.

4. See L. S. Sutherland, *The East India Company in Eighteenth Century Politics*. Oxford, 1952, *passim*.

5. East India Company Court Book 79, p. 323.

had been strongly recommended for employment by Lord Rockingham*, urged on by Edmund Burke, who had known him for some years and who had a high opinion of him. His reason for seeking employment in India, was the financial straits to which he had been reduced since 1769 by the collapse of the fortunes of Lauchlin Maclean (an adventurer of much more note who also sought refuge in India'), with whom he had been intimately associated.

His qualifications to hold offices and to supersede experienced Company servants⁶ were not obvious. He had received, as he claimed 'a liberal education', had travelled in America, France and Italy', is believed to have written various pamphlets on East India affairs in 1767⁷, certainly wrote in the newspapers against the Grafton Administration in 1769⁸, and in 1768 was sent by the Secretary of State Lord Shelburne on a confidential mission to Corsica, on which he wrote an interesting report published in Lord FitzMaurice's *Life of Lord Shelburne*⁹. On the other hand his private life was scandalous¹⁰, he had seen the inside of a debtor's prison¹¹, and he had failed to make his way in the world. Hastings, however, spoke well of his work¹² (though he later stated "I never placed any confidence in John Stewart")¹³ and he was personally well-liked. After his early death a friend wrote, I never think of his wit and sociality without regret"¹⁴.

6. Rockingham had supported his unsuccessful application to go out as Secretary to the Commission of Three Supervisors sent out to India in 1769, whose ship was lost on the way out (FitzWilliam MSS. (Sheffield) J. Stewart to E. Burke, 24 September 1769), and also his attempt to be elected Secretary of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in 1770. (Royal Society of Arts. Loose Archives A6/72.)

7. Sutherland, *op. cit.*

8. Hastings had protested mildly against this, e.g., Letter to L. Sullivan, 10 February 1770. Quoted G. R. Gleig, *Memoirs of the Life of the Right Hon. Warren Hastings*, 1841, 1, 187-8.

9. See his memorandum to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.

10. See the volume numbered 189 in the pamphlet collection in the London Library, St. James's Square.

11. FitzWilliam MSS. (Sheffield) letter referred to in n. 6 above.

12. ii, 123 *seq.*

13. See the scurrilous *Memoirs of Mrs. Anne Bailey containing a narrative of her various adventures in life*. Printed for the author, 1771.

14. In 1765. Publ. Rec. Off. King's Bench Prisons Commitment Books. Prisons 4/vol. 3, p. 434.

15. Letter quoted by Gleig, *op. cit.*, i, 189. "I am much pleased with Mr. Stuart. He is a sensible man and appears to possess a good temper."

16. *Ibid.* Add. MS. 29129, f. 24. W. Hastings to S. Pechell, 23 February 1782.

17. *Ibid.* Add. MS. 29143, f. 82. J. MacPherson to W. Hastings, 13 February 1779.

His career in India was destined to be a short one. On the arrival of General Clavering, Colonel Monson and Philip Francis he fell a victim to their partizan reforming zeal. He was dismissed from his offices in 1775¹⁸, and after an unsuccessful attempt to get the Supreme Court to intervene on his behalf¹⁹, he sailed for England, determined to demand redress from the Court of Directors. Arriving there in September or October 1776, he was in time to play a part in the curious incident of the resignation of Warren Hastings offered by Hastings's agent Lauchlin Maclean²⁰, and to benefit by the private clauses of the agreement which accompanied it, to reinstate Hastings's friends. It was not, however, till 1777 that he was promised in lieu of his former positions that of a member of the Bengal Board of Trade, and some months later that he sailed for India²¹. Nor did he reach his destination for he died of tuberculosis in 1778 on the voyage leaving a penniless newly-married wife²² and an illegitimate son, who later entered the Company's military service. While in England he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and published in the *Philosophical Transactions* of 1777 'An account of the Kingdom of Thibet, in a letter from John Stewart, F.R.S., to Sir John Pringle, Bart. F.R.S.', incorporating the report of his friend George Bogle, whom Warren Hastings had sent on a mission in the hope of opening up intercourse with that unknown land²³. Stewart's account made some impression, being translated into French and Italian.

FitzWilliam MSS. (Sheffield) R77-10-6²⁴.

Calcutta, Bengal.

7th March 1773.

My Lord,

By the opportunity of Captain Hamilton's return to England I present my most humble respects to your Lordship from Bengal taking advantage of permission which your Lordship was pleased to grant me when I had the honour to wait on you to take leave before I came away.

18. Hastings reported what had happened to Lord North on 20 November 1775 (Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 29127, f. 234).

19. Vansittart MSS., Bisham Abbey. George Vansittart's European Letter Book iii, 121-4. G. Vansittart to J. Graham, 25 November 1775.

20. Stewart gave verbal testimony in support of Maclean's assertion that he was authorised to resign on Hastings's behalf.

21. Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 29138, ff. 424 seq. J. Stewart to W. Hastings, 23 May 1777.

22. Johanna Maria Murray d. of William Murray of Jamaica. See her letters to Hastings. Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 29143, f. 303, and Add. MS. 29147, f. 306.

23. See India Office Library Orme MSS. O.V. 71.4, and Home Miscellaneous, Vol. 118.

24. The punctuation and spelling of the original have been preserved, but contractions have been expanded and the use of capitals adjusted to modern usage.

I wish I had any thing to communicate worthy your Lordships notice. Occurrences at present are few, and I feel myself from my situation rather restrained from such speculations and observations on the state of things here as might be acceptable to your Lordship. I may be permitted however to say that I have found Bengal on a near view to be an object even exceeding in importance what I had conceived it to be at a distance. Under whatever name it is held I foresee that it may be always made one of the brightest jewells in the British Crown and I am confident, one of the most easy to be secured.

It is almost impossible in imagination to exceed the real beauty, fertility, and convenience for trade which this country exhibits, and even for the salubrity of its climate; if the last year was a fair specimen I know none equal to it. By the returns made to me of the burials in Calcutta of Whites of our Communion including soldiers, sailors, women and children etc. etc. there were only 170 died, and I am confident the whole number of that body of people cannot be less than 7 or 8000 in the place, for in the article of women I include all the Mestizes²⁵ etc. that live with the white men, and their children of course go in the list. Of near 230 Company's civil servants in Bengal only 2 died²⁶.

The heats here begin about the latter end of this month and continue till June. The mercury in the thermometer rises to a great height in that time, but the weather much more tolerable than I have felt it in North America during their summer months. In June last I had it often at 106 in my tent on a tour up the country with the Governor²⁷ and we were all in health and spirits at the time. While the rains continue it is pleasant and healthy. In about October and till the latter end of November when the rains first begin to take off, it is sickly and disagreeable enough, but in December the north wind from the high mountains of Napal and Thibet covered with eternal snows, set in, and make I believe the pleasantest climate in the universe for 3 compleat months. We all get into cloths and shauls and sleep under 2 or 3 blankets. The air is clear and sharp, the sun shining always out and not one drop of rain. In this time we eat, drink and take all sorts of exercise as in Europe. Indeed almost all the year round you have garden stuff of every kind in the greatest abundance, a thing

25. Women of mixed race. A term originally used of inhabitants of Goa born of a Portuguese father and Indian mother.

26. Stewart was unusually lucky in his experience during this year. The mortality was often considerably higher.

27. Stewart accompanied Warren Hastings in his tour upcountry to Murshidabad etc. which began on 3 June and lasted for two and a half months.

unknown in the rest of India, and you have beef, mutton, veal as in London and some excellent fish such as what we call a manga²⁸ fish which is the most delicious of all fish that swims.

I had imagined the country to be exceeding low from the annual overflowing of the lands, but I found it almost every where finely elevated above the common bed of the waters. Indeed in the summer when the Ganges comes down it fills it to the top of its banks and spreads creeks canals and communications every where. The whole country is then alive and commodities of all sorts are transported 1000 miles at almost the same expence that it would cost you to bring them from Dorking to London. I have calculated that at the price of grain last season in some of the distant provinces a man might live for 3 rupees per annum, but if you gave him 4 he could live like a prince²⁹. A rupee is about 2/4 sterling.

Perhaps your Lordship would not dislike I should attempt giving you some notion of this city of Calcutta. You will then imagine a large river very much resembling the Thames at London, but broader and much more deep and rapid. Along its banks bending into a large arch, the town stretches itself for near 4 English miles and runs back about one in breadth. The quarter inhabited by the English is the lowest on the river and is laid off in regular and wide streets with spacious and showy houses, such as in appearance eclipse, (not to speak of London) almost any thing in Paris or Italy. I say in appearance for they will not bear an examination, they are all of brick plaistered over and whitewashed, but all attempt some order of architecture and you see nothing but portico's, columnades, galleries, etc. etc. some few in good taste, several tolerable, and many more wretchedly bad. However the approach to the town in front of the Esplanade of the new Fort³⁰, presents you at a distant (*sic*) with an appearance more of a city of antient Greece or Asia (according to my notions) than any thing I ever beheld. The other quarters of the town are a mixture of miserable huts and old Moorish and Indian *kelhats*³¹ and *seraglios* where they (*sic*) inhabitants mew themselves up with their women and servants unvisited by Europeans or indeed by one another.

28. Mango fish.

29. This would seem to be an exaggeration even in remote districts. At Kasimbazar in 1739 the pay of a coolie was 2 rupees a month. S. Bhattacharya, *The East India Company and the Economy of Bengal from 1704 to 1740*, 1954, p. 204-5.

30. The new fort which Clive had begun to build for the defence of Calcutta and which was now nearing completion. The Esplanade was the official centre of the city.

31. *Kalhat*[ti], a collection of huts (?).

I know of no rule by which to compute the inhabitants of a place, but when I observe the extent of the town the numbers of people that appear stuffed (*sic*) into one hut, and the eternal croud which fills the streets and bazars I should not hesitate to say that there are to a third or a fourth near as many inhabitants in Calcutta as in London³².

The city of Moorshedabad the residence of the Nabob³³ is still larger than Calcutta and was formerly much more inhabited, it is now falling off every day. I went there with Mr. Hastings on business of no insignificant importance³⁴ and had then an opportunity of observing very near, the manners, forms and intrigues of an Asiatic Court. The splendour however of that of Moorshedabad is almost gone. We put the finishing stroke to it. I own I felt a degree of compassion and remorse when I saw so many great families sinking into indigence, and proud Musselman Lords excluded from honours, profits and employments and obliged to bend to the ground before a parcel of *Fringuis*³⁵ from t'other end of the world, whom a few years ago they hardly regarded as on a level with their dogs. When I considered however the treatment these same Mahometans bestowed upon the Hindoes (*sic*) the original inhabitants I got over my remorse.

I cannot conceive how any person at Home can entertain a doubt of our being able to hold this country, when we see how long the Mahometans have kept it, so inferiour to us either in policy or the art of war, and more detested I believe by the natives. The number

32. The population of London at this time was estimated at about 700,000; opinions varied greatly as to that of Calcutta.

33. The Nawab of Bengal, at this time the minor Mubarakud-Daulah.

34. Hastings said of his visit there, "This period was employed in settling the collections and the government of the districts dependent on Moorshedabad in reducing the Nabob's stipend from thirty-two lacs to sixteen. in reducing his pension list, and other expences; in forming, recommending and executing a new arrangement of his household; and in framing a new system for conducting the business of the Dewannee, or revenue" (quoted Gleig, *op cit.*, 1, 261). These changes were the result of the Company's decision to "stand forth as Dewan" of Bengal.

35. Feringis, Frangis or Franks, Arab term originally used to denote the inhabitants of Western Europe. The hard lot of the nobility at the Nawab's Court was recognised in the official report. "Some hundreds of persons of the ancient nobility of the country, excluded under our government from almost all employments, civil or military, had ever since the revolution depended on the bounty of the Nabob. It is not that the distribution was always made with judgement and impartiality. but when the question was to cut off the greatest part, it could not fail to be accompanied with circumstances of real distress. The President [Hastings] declares that even with some of the highest rank he could not avoid discovering under all the pride of Eastern manners, the manifest marks of penury and want." (General Letter, Secret Department, 10 November 1772, quoted M. E. Monckton Jones, *Warren Hastings in Bengal 1772-1774*, Oxford, 1918, pp. 191-2.)

of Musselman bear not the smallest proportion to the Hindoos. The differences of their manners are strongly marked. The Musselmans are active, proud, despotic, liberal, cruel, and the most easy and polite in their address of any people I have ever met with. The French are clowns to them. The Hindoos are gentle, indolent, submissive, covetous, and rather awkward and reserved in their address. I feel a great veneration for the antient Rajahs of the country. We look upon them very unjustly as meer (*sic*) officers of Government in their quality of Zamindars³⁶, but they are in fact the true nobility of the country, and the people feel them as such. They are what our feudal Lords were and have their retainers about them in the same manner, keeping up much of the state and dignity of that character. Your Lordship may judge of what consequence a man may become who enjoys, as many of them does (*sic*), an estate of, to the amount of 40, or 50,000 pounds sterling per annum, in a country and of a religion that allows him to eat nothing but rice. How many mouths may he not feed ?

Your Lordship will naturally expect that I should say something of the state of defence of this country, particularly against a European enemy. First I must observe that if our Ministry are any thing watchful I think it impossible the French should ever be able to send a great force here, without our having a greater at their heels, but supposing they were, they can only come on this coast in a certain season. The landing is almost impracticable but in the river and the entry is the most difficult navigation in the world. We could at all times take up the buoys. If they could even push up, they would meet a post called Brunswick which commands the river absolutely lately erected by Colonel Campbell³⁷ that would be exceedingly difficult to force. If they disembarked their troops below it on either side, they would meet a country intersected with creeks and nullas where they might be continually harassed and opposed at every pass. If after all they arrive at Calcutta they would find a morsel in the new Fort which they could not digest. According to my notions, it ought to be, if properly garrisoned, impregnable to any thing that can attack it in this country³⁸. If one was to reckon by what it cost, it should be stronger

36. The Zamindars, originally officers of government of the Mughal Empire, but became with the passing of time more in the nature of hereditary landowners, contained in their number many descendants of the pre-Mughal aristocracy. The nature of the Zamindar's position was to lead to much dispute in England. Stewart's opinion, though expressed differently from that which Philip Francis later advanced was not dissimilar from it.

37. Colonel Archibald Campbell, formerly of Bombay, the Chief Engineer.

38. Hastings, unlike Philip Francis, always maintained that Bengal was, "incapable of attack by sea", though he feared attack from land in alliance with an Indian ally.

than Luxembourg, Lisle and Bergen op Zoom put together". but it is in fact a noble, commodious and strong fortification and as far as it has been finished by Campbell executed in a masterly manner. Little is wanting to compleat it. Both the body of the place and the outworks are in the best stile, the casemates airy and convenient, the ditches wide and clear, and there is a peculiar advantage attached to them, that you may fill them and drain them twice every day, if you chuse. Campbell's sluices are capital works.

While we suppose you an European enemy employed before Fort William, our force would be collecting; and having possession of all the provinces we have the revenues of course. There is now on this establishment about 28,000 men. We had lately a Review here of about 6 battalions with 16 pieces of cannon and I assure your Lordship they would have made a figure in Hyde Park. I mean as to the seapoys. They are well composed and well disciplined. The Europeans are well as to the last but if you won't allow us good men from Home we cannot make them here".

The only Country Power from which we have any thing to apprehend is the Mahrattas, and we are only open to them, and that in a small degree, by one way. I mean from the south west, and even there they have to penetrate through Midnapore, a province of small account before they could do us hurt. To the west we have the Beerboon Mountains³⁹, the Soan⁴⁰, the Carumnassa⁴¹ and the Ganges to defend us and to the northward we are fenced in from all enemies by the frozen Tartar Wall, part I believe of the southern Caucasus⁴², which stretches all along to the westward⁴³ as far as Assam and China. I have been very inquisitive about Assam since I came here without being able to obtain much information⁴⁴. I suspect however a communication with China that way would not be difficult, nor the distance be found so great as the maps lay down. The river of

39. The expense of the new fort had greatly exceeded expectations.

40. The Company had had to withdraw its Recruiting Bills of 1770 and 1771. Sutherland, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

41. The Birbhum Mountains, about 150 miles north west of Calcutta.

42. The river Son, a right-bank tributary of the Ganges.

43. The river Karamnasa, a smaller and more westerly right-bank tributary of the Ganges.

44. The Himalayas had been so described since Pliny and Strabo, though James Rennell's map has the name 'Himmaleh Mts.' at the eastern end of the range.

45. Stewart meant not 'westward' but 'eastward'.

46. For the contacts between Assam and Bengal at this time see S. K. Bhuyan, *Anglo-Assamese Relations 1771-1826*, Gauhati, Assam, 1949, pp. 67 *seq.*

Barrampoota⁴⁷ which we take hardly any notice of at Home is certainly one of the largest in the world. It is greater than the Ganges. We know nothing of it but that it enters our provinces from the east and pouring down an amazing flood of waters on the skirts of our territories, disembogues itself into the sea, near the mouth of the great Ganges by Sundeep⁴⁸.

We are now in all appearance ready to get into hostilities with the Mahrattas, about the Province of Corah⁴⁹ of which they have obtained a free grant from the Mogol, much as we obtained that of Bengal. That is to say after we had thrashed him, stript him and tyed his hands, with this difference that we only got a grant of what we had already, and would have kept without it, and the Mahrattas, of what they never had, nor will not now get. We defend these provinces with their own revenues and the Vizir Souja Dowla's money⁵⁰ who has called us in, and I believe the Mahrattas will think seriously before they enter into an offensive war with us or attack our own territories⁵¹.

It is now about a year and a half since Shaw Allum the Great Mogol, tired out with waiting for our assistance to replace him on the throne of Delhi,⁵² quitted to Korah Province and threw himself upon the Mohrattas (*sic*). They did carry him to Delhi and put him on the throne, but he soon found he was only their lieutenant. He quarrelled with them they fought, and in a pitched battle about 3 months ago which lasted from morn till night, he was defeated altho his two Seapoy battalions trained up under our officers (who were withdrawn afterwards) retreated in good order in the face of the whole Mahratta army of 50 thousand men⁵³. I mention the Mogols condition

47. The river Brahmaputra.

48. The Island of Sandwip.

49. Kora. After the Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam, had put himself under the protection of the Marathas at Delhi in 1771, they persuaded him to cede to them the Provinces of Kora and Allahabad, assigned to the Emperor by Clive. The Company were not prepared to allow the transfer to take place.

50. Shuja-ud-daula, Vazir of Oudh. The Bengal Government were pledged to support him against the Marathas, in return for a fixed payment for the use of Company troops. In the following August, Hastings handed over these provinces to Oudh in return for a considerable sum, got the payment for the Company troops raised, but agreed to assist the Vazir in his plan of conquering the Rohillas.

51. Though minor brushes occurred, Stewart was correct in this assumption.

52. Ever since 1761 the intention to bring about his return to Delhi had been expressed by the Bengal Government, but steps had not been taken to implement the intention.

53. On 17 December, 1772. Stewart does not mention that the French mercenary troops under Rene Madec were the heroes of the day. J. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, 2nd edn. Calcutta, 1952, iii, 48 *seq.*

at present that your Lordship may be better able to form an idea of the consideration which his ambassador Major Morrison⁵⁴ has a right to expect. He is gone Home to treat with his Majesty for a surrender to him of all which the Company now hold in India. By my notions it is little less than treason for any subject to accept of such a commission. We would not recognize him in that quality here, we are impatient to hear how he will be received at Home.

Your Lordship is undoubtedly acquainted with Mr. Hastings being at present Governor of Bengal, he was moved from Madrass. I came here with him, and have been happy enough to conciliate his intimate friendship and favour. I was appointed by my friend Sir G. Colebrooke⁵⁵ Judge Advocate with the reversion to the Secretaryship. I am now in possession of both and before I succeeded to the latter I lived with Mr. H. and acted as his private secretary. . My appointments would allow me to lay up a good deal of money in any country but this, but the unavoidable expences are so great that I am afraid I shall not effect it, nor raise a Nabobs fortune soon unless I can strike out some concerns in the country to bring in a yearly profit, and I have some prospects that way.

I observe the cry is now up against the India Company and that she is marked out to be baited in Parliament⁵⁶. I imagine she may be sweated but I am confident there are enough of good men in both Houses to prevent her from being sacrificized (*sic*) altogether either to ministerial power or popular clamour. I am too new here and of too little consequence to apprehend that my name will be bandied about in public, but I dare say Mr. Hastings will be mentioned and I am anxious that it be treated with the respect it deserves⁵⁷. I dare say your Lordship is no stranger to the character he bears and to the general estimation in which he stands both with the Company and the world at large. I should be glad if I had leisure and permission to submit an account of his management here at the head of a great State

54. Major John R. Morrison, late of the Company's forces was sent to Calcutta by the Emperor to demand his tribute (which the Bengal Government refused to pay since he had put himself in the hands of their enemies). When disappointed he sailed for Europe in a foreign ship to put the Emperor's case before the King. Hastings was uneasy lest he should be received in England, but unnecessarily (letter to Sir G. Colebrooke of 14 January 1773 printed Gleig, *op. cit.*, i, 275 *seq.*).

55. In 1772-73 Chairman of the East India Company.

56. The enquiries preceding Lord North's Indian legislation of 1773.

57. Hastings's reputation stood on the contrary so high at this time that he was appointed first Governor General under the Regulating Act, Rockingham and his friends in Opposition protesting, however, on general grounds.

(as I may call Bengal) to your Lordship's judgement and knowledge in public affairs; perhaps I may obtain both and I am persuaded your Lordship will receive my attempt favourably. Indeed I acknowledge I have a design to introduce Mr. H. to your correspondence". I have even hinted it to him. He seemed flattered with the notion, but is backward for fear it should appear intruding upon you. The high respect I entertain for your Lordship's rank and qualifications, and pardon my expression the warm friendship I bear to your person, would ever prevent me from introducing to your acquaintance a person unworthy of it, but I am positive you would look upon Mr. H. as an acquisition. His name your Lordship will observe is not such as you meet commonly in the list of India Governors and let me assure you, he possesses sentiments worthy of his name and both in education and manners as well as in talents is fit to fill any station with credit. His absence from England has kept him from entering much into our factions at Home, but with a true independent spirit he values good men of either side and has a peculiar respect for that set of men with whom your Lordship is particularly connected and with the party of which I may say your Lordship is the head.

I would not have taken up your Lordship's attention on this subject did I not mean as I have said before to introduce, some time or other Mr. Hastings to you. In a private capacity I am sure you will think him a valuable acquaintance and in a public light, I look upon it that in the line of public affairs which your Lordship is pleased to adopt, you will consider a Governor of Bengal as no loose card in the pack.

When I look over this desultory and uncorrect (*sic*) epistle I hardly know how to appologize (*sic*) for my presumption in addressing it to your Lordship. I sat down only to write a few lines conveying my respects and wishes for your health and prosperity. I have indeed been unlucky in some curiosities particularly in 2 Napal birds which by so good an opportunity as that of Hamilton I thought to have sent to your Lordship. They died in coming down. I must endeavour to make the loss up next year. While I remain in India I trust your Lordship will honour me with your commands of any sort where I can be of service to you. The Rockingham is gone down the river. I had no time while the public Despatches were on hand to write my own letters. I send them now express after the ship and I hope this will serve as my excuse for not transcribing and correcting this blotted peice (*sic*).

58. Hastings was a notoriously bad correspondent, and did not follow this up.

I am happy to learn by Hamilton that Lady Rockingham has recovered her health so compleately⁵⁹ (*sic*).

With my most respectful compliments to your Lordship, allow me the honour to subscribe myself

My Lord Marquis
Your Lordships most obedient and
most humble servant
John Stewart.

L. S. SUTHERLAND

59. Lady Rockingham had been seriously ill in 1771.

INKS AND PAPERS

FOR USE IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN U.S.A.

FOR more than forty centuries man has been trying to find and perfect a record ink which would adequately convey to posterity an account of his actions, feelings and hopes. The earliest inks were those made from the juices and berries; then more ambitious souls gathered shells from the seashore, which, when ground fine and mixed with water or other liquefying agent, became the conveyor of the scribe's message to a limited posterity. These inks were applied with a brush made either of chewed fibre, or of hair. According to Carvalho, the first writing appeared between 1500 and 1800 B. C.

Specifying inks for government offices had its beginning in the United States in 1891 when the Legislature of Massachusetts authorized a standard ink and provided a penalty for failure to use it. This standard was submitted to manufacturers and after bids had been received, a supply was purchased for the state by the record commissioner who had the care of its distribution to all record offices in the state. Curiously enough, the ink approved was one of the iron gall tannate inks, similar in content to that which was concocted in the twelfth century from an effusion of gall nuts procured from oak trees in Eastern Europe. The standard ink of Massachusetts was used as standard by Connecticut in 1895 when the Legislature passed the following law: "No person having the care or custody of any book of records or registry in any of the departments or offices of the state or of any county, city, town, borough or probate district therein, shall use or allow to be used upon such books any ink excepting such as is furnished by the secretary of state". Section three of this same law states that "the inks so furnished before acceptance by the secretary shall be examined by a chemist to be designated by the secretary" etc. Soon after this, the federal government in its treasury department began ink standardization for use on official records.

Since 1902, supervision in the State of Connecticut has been in charge of the Examiner of Public Records. This office was created by the legislature following advice from a commission which had been previously appointed. The duties of the Examiner of Public Records are as follows: "Such Examiner of Public Records shall cause such action to be taken by persons having the care and custody of public records as may be necessary to put such records in the custody and condition required by law and to secure their safety and preservation".

"Before the examiner shall approve of any ink, he shall cause a number of distinct and separate brands to be examined as to quality by a state chemist, and give his approval of not less than four different brands or manufactures, and the inks so approved shall be standard inks for use in this state".

For the latest tests of inks and typewriter ribbons in Connecticut sample inks were placed in blank bottles which were then numbered. Concurrently, all identification marks were eliminated from sample typewriter ribbons, each of which was also given a number; the key in all cases being retained in the Examiner's office so that the state chemist might not be influenced in either his test or report. Care had been taken to purchase all samples from retail stock excepting those few ribbons manufactured by mills having no retail outlet. The ink test covered first "Chemical and Physical Characteristics" of each sample. Under this section, the sample was tested for sediment after twenty-four hours; for mould, scum and sediment after two weeks with an opportunity to score ten points. The amount of iron contained in each one hundred cubic centimeters was determined with a minimum standard rating of five. In a "Streak Test" the character, colour, amount of striking through, blackness after one week's time and action on steel pens took a minimum standard rating of five points.

In "Effect of Reagents" the second sub-division of the Streak Test, the samples were tested for loss of colour after having been immersed in water twenty-four hours and in a fifty percent alcohol solution for twenty-four hours. Samples were also immersed in a bleaching solution for varying periods, fifteen minutes, one hour and twenty-four hours, with a minimum possible rating of ten points.

"Fading" was the final sub-division of the test. Each sample was subjected to ultra-violet light for a period of forty-eight hours with a minimum acceptable rating of seventy points. A possible maximum of one hundred twenty points might be obtained for the combined test but a minimum of one hundred points must be obtained. Actually only five of twenty-five ink samples attained a record of over one hundred and of these, one was a carbon ink later approved by the State Chemist. No ball point pen ink has been approved to date.

The length, thickness and width of typewriter ribbons were measured to indicate which ribbon contained most value in proportion to its cost. The "Character of Ribbon", thread count, evenness of edge, and imperfections have much to do with the quality of the work produced. The "Character of Writing" (basic colour, oiliness, smudging and typefilling) determine whether or not the ribbon will produce an evenness of writing and one which will force into the paper a sufficient quantity

of ink to make a suitable permanent record. The "Life of Ribbon" which includes a weardown and recovery test indicates the amount of time the operator can safely continue to use the ribbon for record purposes. "Fading" is tested by a similar procedure used in the ink test and the importance of this part of the test is indicated by the fact that our standard, which has a total of one hundred points, allots sixty of these to fading qualities in the ribbon. In order that a ribbon should pass the Connecticut test, a minimum of eighty-five points is required and of the fifty-five ribbons tested, thirty-nine were approved. In both the ink and the ribbon tests, standards of the National Bureau of Standards were followed to a large extent. However, additional tests were added as required by Connecticut's state regulation.

The permanence of ink has been a very important factor in the preservation of records in Connecticut in a number of instances. During the flood and hurricane of 21 September 1938, the value of a good record ink as shown by the following experience will always be helpful in the enforcement of our law. In one of our Probate Districts, the records were housed in a safe located in a small office building near a brook which was close to a mill pond. When the hurricane was reported, the record volumes and files were hurriedly transferred to the town vault. In the excitement, the card index was neglected. Several dams in the back country failed and a flood which swelled the brook to river size floated the Probate office away from the foundation and deposited it in the mill pond. An oil heater, which was burning at the time, exploded, split the building apart and deposited the index in the mud at the bottom of the pond. Three days later, after the water had subsided, the index was found. The cards were washed and dried and the records, while not as good as new, were readable and therefore useable.

Modern record paper, with its exact chemical and fibre content determined to the Nth degree, is a far cry from bark, papyrus, skin or parchment which were used in the earliest era of writing. In 1639, the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony passed an act which reads as follows: "It is ordered and declared that henceforward, every judgement, with all its evidence, be recorded in a book to be kept to posterity". Later, in 1816, the necessity for a very definite type of paper was recognized and the following law was passed by the legislature of that same state: "All matters which are to be entered of record in any office of public record.....shall be so entered or recorded on paper made wholly of linen, of firm texture, well glazed and well finished". Nearly one hundred years later, Connecticut placed on its law books the following: "No person having custody of any book of record or registry in any department or office of the state or of

any county, city, town, borough or probate district shall use or permit to be used for recording purposes any book which shall not be composed wholly of a standard millbrand paper with dated watermark approved by the Examiner of Public Records". This law has remained substantially the same except for the addition of a penalty of one hundred dollars fine for failure to obey. This penalty also may be imposed for the failure to use an approved ink.

The paper test is sub-divided into "Chemical Characteristics" noting fibre, acidity, rosin and glue content. The stability of the sample is also tested for alpha cellulose content and copper number after seventy-two hours at one hundred degrees centigrade. Only one hundred percent white rag stock may be used and the paper may contain not less than a minimum of five percent acid; one and five tenths percent glue and ninety percent minimum alpha cellulose; one percent maximum of rosin and one percent maximum copper number. The "Physical Characteristics" include folding endurance and bursting strength tests which vary according to the weight of the paper tested. The "Writing Characteristics" include ruling, writing and erasure—the first two must be clean cut without spreading and show a suitable degree of penetration while the third, erasure, must leave a suitable surface which will absorb a proper amount of ink without spreading and still retain a satisfactory surface. The paper test also follows United States Bureau of Standards and in addition to these, we use a tearing test necessitated by the fact that at present many of the official record volumes are of the locking, loose leaf binder type.

It will be noted that papers are tested on a basis different from inks in that maximum and minimum requirements are offered in the case of inks or typewriter ribbons while the paper standard provides that if the sample fails in any one of the sub-divisions indicated, that paper may not be approved.

The building of a record paper requires constant vigilance for not only is it necessary to overcome ordinary ageing and ink hazards but this product must be able to resist effectively the acids which are caused by the combination of perspiration and hand lotions used by most workers in record offices whose contact with the records is practically continuous.

The record official of today is usually of the highest type and through the years has developed great pride in his records with more than ordinary concern that suitable inks and permanent papers should be provided for their continuance.

TWO UNPUBLISHED AKHBARS FROM POONA

RANI Saheba Srimati Sitabai of Gangakhed, a Tahsil town on the bank of the Godavari in the Marathwada, has made a free and generous gift of her entire collection of family records numbering more than a lakh to the Central Records Office, Hyderabad. At the 29th Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission held at Bhopal in 1953, I read a paper pointing out the wide range of topics which this collection covers and the different languages in which the documents are written. Among the wealth of materials to be found in this collection, I may draw attention to many important news letters from the Poona agents of Nizam Ali Khan (1761-1803) covering the period 1794-96. It is proposed to publish them in two volumes in continuation of the three volumes of Poona Akhbars already issued by the Central Records Office, Hyderabad. Two of these letters, which have hitherto been unpublished throw great light on the mystery surrounding the death of Peshwa Madhavarao II. The first was despatched a day previous to his death and the second five days after the calamity. Both the *Akhbars* are graphic and recreate the contemporary atmosphere. These are invaluable as there are very few papers of this eventful week in the several source books published so far in Marathi. The last letter in the fifth volume of Rajwade's Series is only a summary account of the letters sent by Balaji Raghunath and Keshavrao Kondaji and is very brief.

*Summary of Akhbars despatched on 12th Rabi II, 1210 A.H.,
i.e. 26 October 1795*

"The account of the accidental fall of the Srimant from the first floor of the Ganapati Mahal, the way in which his thigh bone was broken, how the hand suffered a fracture, and how the teeth penetrated the lips were all communicated to you in my earlier report. Later, a physician was sent for. He attended to the wound and the fractures. Nana waited till late in the night. He was with the Peshwa in the Hall of Gods, and nobody had any access to the Peshwa. But, when Tukoji Holkar's arrival was reported, he was at once shown in to see him. He watched him along with Nana for two *ghatikas*¹ and then departed. The Peshwa was conscious but did not speak to anybody. He does not accept anything to eat. The wounds are serious. They say that the fractures and the wounds can be cured. But his brain has been affected. He becomes delirious and that is causing a great anxiety. All the senior administrators have been overpowered by the dangerous condition of the Peshwa. They say if he maintains his own

1. A duration of 24 minutes, there are 60 *ghatikas* in a full day of 24 hours. It is Sanskrit in origin and had become *ghadi* in Hindi.

for three or four days without any complications he will be out of danger. Nana distributed alms to the poor and also made gifts of buffaloes because the Peshwa has survived this terrific accident. A fragment of a bone from the thigh was again reset in the cavity and the wounded thigh was bandaged properly when he was unconscious. Great anxiety is felt regarding his diet. Soft wheat cake cannot be given because he is suffering from fever, and rice is to be avoided lest it should cause pus. Nana is visiting the Peshwa thrice a day and is meticulously looking after every detail. All the three Phadkes—Ramachandrarao, Laxmanrao and Madhavarao—are attending upon him by rotation. Appa Balwant and Chintaman Phadke and Raghopant Godbole also are attending. All feel that the Peshwa should not have been taken to the first floor of the Ganapati Mahal but none could foresee what was in store. Letters have been addressed to Daulatrao Shinde, Raghoji Bhonsle and Parashurampant Mirajkar to go to Poona expeditiously. On the 11th instant, the moment the news of his deadly fall got round merchants in the market at once closed their shops. Nana had issued instructions to make special arrangements for maintaining order.”

*Summary of Akhbar despatched on 18th of Rabiakhar 1210 A.H.,
i.e. 1 November 1795*

“The death of Madhavarao on Tuesday 13th Rabi II after sunset has already been reported. Nana is holding secret conferences with Govindrao Bhagwant and Ramachandrarao Phadke, and even Appa Balwant is occasionally called. He desires that an heir of Madhavarao alone should be installed as the Peshwa. But he intends to hold consultations with Parashurampant Mirajkar and also desires to know the wishes of the Bandagan-e-Ali.

Nana has taken special precautions to maintain law and order at Satara and at Boreghat forts. Bajirao Raghunath at Junnar has already been kept under strict restraint. After the death of Madhavarao, additional forces have been commissioned to go to Junnar. Sixty thousand Rupees have been sanctioned for the obsequies. A person by name Ramarao, a native of Rajmachi, has been asked to perform the rites, because he belongs to the same *gotra*² and he is also the family priest of the Peshwa, and a *grihastha*³ or family man with two sons. Nana is also planning to make the younger son of Ramarao adopted by the wife of the late Peshwa.

2. The upper class Hindus are supposed to be the descendents of ancient *rishis* and every orthodox Hindu remembers it. Several families may claim the same *gotra*. Generally among the orthodox, intermarriages are avoided between persons having the same *gotra*.

3. Literally, one who stays in the house; householder. There are four *Ashramas* or stages in the life of a Hindu, *Brahmacharya* or celibacy till 25, *Grihashta* till 50, *Vanaprastha* till 75 and *Sanyasa* till 100.

Nana has become extremely dejected, a veritable stranger to sleep. Generally he does not stir out of the house, and whenever he goes out he takes great care to ensure his personal protection. He has given assurances to the merchants in the market and advised them to keep business running. Pickets have been posted outside the town for guard duty at night. Mr. Malet has gone to Bombay and Nana has written to him that he should return as early as possible. Nana goes in the evening to the palace of the Peshwa, sits for some time and receives condolences from the visitors. Azamuddowla, Bhapkar, Nimbalkar, Pandurangarao and other dignitaries went to meet Nana on the 15th. Messrs. Heron and Uthhoff, assistants of Malet, also arrived on the 16th to offer their condolences. Akbar Ali Khan, maternal uncle of the Prince, and Sridhar Laxman, the *Vakil* of Bhonsle, have also gone to the palace to meet Nana. On the 17th, Nana despatched two messengers on camels to summon Mirajkar urgently."

In the second volume of the Poona Residency Correspondence there are three letters written by J. Uthhoff to Sir John Shore, the first dated 27 October 1795, the second 28 October 1795 and the third 2 November 1795, and these lend support to the account given in the above two letters. The details of the calamity had been collected by the British envoy with as much sincerity and consciousness of the momentous character of the event as by the Hyderabad newswriter. But the account given above by the Maratha Brahmin reporter from Hyderabad has a greater evidential value than that of Uthhoff, for the former, being after all a son of the soil, was able to see things in their proper perspective. A school of historians has always condemned Nana for having so controlled and restricted the movements of Madhavarao II that he had become entirely demoralised and had lost all interest in life, but it is known that he was quite normal when he went to pay obeisance to the deity in procession at the time of *Seemollanghan'* on 23 October 1795, which was the *Dashhara* day, and received customary *nazrs*. This being so only three days before the accident hardly supports the view that he had been contemplating suicide for some time. I trust that the controversy on this topic would be permanently set at rest by the above *Akhbars* and by the reports sent by Uthhoff to the Governor General.

R. M. JOSHI

4. Literally, crossing the border (Sanskrit, *seema* border, limit: *ullanghan* crossing). The Maratha army used to set out ceremonially for fresh campaigns on the day of *dashhara* after the compulsory rest during the monsoon. Thus they crossed the borders of their state literally as well as figuratively on the day on which it is supposed that the Pandavas came out of disguise and began making efforts to regain their lost kingdom. The ceremony used to be performed with great pomp and show at Poona.

AN OUTSTANDING FAMILY ARCHIVES IN THE PUNJAB

DURING recent explorations for historical relics, records and documents in the State undertaken by the Keeper of Records to the Government of the Punjab, a rich and remarkable collection of family papers in the possession of Rai Inderjit Singh Bhandari, Municipal Commissioner, Batala, came to light. It took several months to scrutinize carefully the collection and make a preliminary inventory to ascertain their authenticity and assess their historical significance. The papers, which in many cases form continuous series covering some fifty years, comprise non-official and official correspondence carried on by several distinguished members of the illustrious Bhandari family, who enjoyed the rare distinction of being employed as envoys by the Lahore Darbar at different stations in Cis-Sutlej territories right from the setting up of the Ludhiana Agency after the conclusion of the treaty of Amritsar, 1809, to the annexation of the Punjab, 1849.

The Bhandari caste and family of Batala were founded by Rai Bhag Mal, who is reported to have gone to Ghazni to seek his fortune. On his return to India he invoked the blessings of Baba Farid of Pakpattan for the birth of a son. The name Bhandari was given to him by the saint.

The history of the family is obscure until 1809 when Anand Singh was, through the good offices of Diwan Mohkam Chand, appointed *Vakil* or Agent of the Durbar at Ludhiana, where a Political Agency had been established by the British after the treaty of Amritsar. Anand Singh was afterwards sent to Delhi, his place at Ludhiana being taken by his eldest son, Gobind Jas, while his youngest son, Kishen Chand, was appointed Agent at Karnal and Ambala. Anand Singh accompanied Sir Charles Metcalfe on the latter's successful mission to Bharatpur in 1825 and on his return was awarded the title of Rai and a robe of honour by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. On his death in 1827 his *jagirs* were divided among his four sons. Rai Gobind Jas succeeded his father at Delhi and his brother, Ram Dayal, was sent to Ludhiana as *Vakil*. But the latter quarrelled with Captain Wade and was recalled to Lahore. Rai Kishen Chand took his place and was awarded a *jagir* of Rs. 15,000/- in the Jullundur district and an allowance of Re. 1/- per annum on each village belonging to the Lahore Durbar on the left bank of the Sutlej. Ram Dayal was deputed to Anandpur in 1832 to bring about a settlement among the Sodhis. He remained there for five years and was granted a *jagir* of Rs. 4,000/- in the Ludhiana district. He was subsequently appointed *Vakil* at Ferozpur in place of Faqir Charag Din. Rai Kishen Chand was an able and upright man and clearly

understood that the interest of his master required peace with the British and directed his efforts to achieve this end. Early in 1839 he accompanied Col. Wade on his mission to Peshawar. During his absence for about a year, his son, Bhag Singh, filled the post of *Vakil* at Ludhiana. Prince Nau Nihal Singh conferred the title of Rai on Kishen Chand in 1840.

In the period following the murder of Raja Dhyani Singh and Maharaja Sher Singh the position and powers of *Vakils* gained in importance. Rai Kishen Chand, and his brother and son, who were functioning as the Agents of the Durbar, gained considerable influence and exercised civil and criminal powers in the Cis-Sutlej territories of the Lahore Durbar and drew therefrom large revenues. At times they followed policies different from those of Faqir Azizuddin and enjoyed the support of Bhai Ram Singh and Diwan Dina Nath, the leader of the Mutsaddi party at Lahore.

On the eve of the First Anglo-Sikh War in 1845, Rai Kishen Chand exerted his influence to dissuade the Durbar from going to war with the British. When the Sikh army threatened to cross the Sutlej, Rai Kishen Chand was ordered by the British Political Agent to leave his camp and retire to the territories of the Lahore Durbar. After the conclusion of peace he was called upon to attend on the Agent to the Governor General at Lahore and held the post until 1848 when he was permitted to retire to Batala. Bhag Singh was, on the conclusion of treaty with the British, appointed the Agent of the Durbar with the Commissioner, Trans-Sutlej States, and was granted the title of Rai and robes of honour in 1848. Rai Kishen Chand, Bhag Singh and Ram Dyal were suitably rewarded with *jagirs* and cash pensions in recognition of their faithful services. Rai Kishen Chand died at Banaras in 1872, Ram Dyal in 1868 and Rai Bhag Singh in 1884.

The later descendants of the family have been playing an important part in the civic life of Batala and are distinguished for many works of public welfare. Rai Inderjit who owns the collection under review is a Municipal Commissioner of many years' standing.

The correspondence portion of the collection, numbering over 4,000 documents is packed in some half a dozen cloth *bastas**; the muniments or title deeds are kept in metal containers of varying sizes; and some outstanding *sanads* are preserved in a separate volume. Except in the case of two or three *bastas*, the papers in all others are grouped together according to the Christian or Vikrama years which they bore and kept in separate paper envelopes. The unsorted papers comprise

*Stand for collections of papers tied in a piece of cloth in the traditional manner of keeping records and documents in bundles.

rolled up documents, which are tied into small bundles of twelve to fifteen sheets. The papers invariably bear the seal or signature of the sender in each case, and in many cases carry the initials of British officers of the day. The papers have been provisionally arranged as follows:

Group A.—Political Correspondence from 1813 to 1867 A.D.

Letters from and to Rai Anand Singh, Rai Kishen Chand and Rai Gobind Jas in their capacity of *Vakils* of the Lahore Durbar. Several communications are addressed to C. M. Wade, George Russel Clerk and other British functionaries. These relate to political affairs, administration, Cis-Sutlej territories of the Lahore Durbar and other matters of mutual interest to the two governments 763 Letters.

Group B.—Miscellaneous Letters sent by Dak

Letters from Rai Gobind Jas to Rai Anand Singh, Rai Bhag Singh and Rai Kishen Chand. They contain mostly private correspondence of the members of the family but they throw considerable light on the contemporary events in the Punjab 167 Letters.

Group C.—Miscellaneous Letters from 1865 to 1916 of the Vikrama Era (1808-59 A.D.)

This group contains *shuqqas* (letters) and *parwanajat* (office orders) issued by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Maharaja Kharak Singh, Maharaja Sher Singh, and *maraslajat* (memoranda) sent by other notables to Rais Anand Singh, Kishen Chand, Gobind Jas, Bhag Singh and Ram Dyal. It contains also copies of important communications addressed by the Durbar to the Governor General or his Political Agents and news-reports from various parts of the country 1872 Letters.

Group D.—Miscellaneous Parwanajat and Letters

Relating to the grant of certain villages in fief to various persons, deeds executed by them, petitions by grantees and letters to prominent British functionaries 37 Documents.

Group E.—(a) Diary of the Agent to Governor General at Ludhiana, 1 March-31 July 1845

The diary contains the day-to-day record of the activities of Major Broadfoot, Political Agent to Lord Hardinge, Governor General, during the reign of Maharaja Dalip Singh, when Syed Moulvi Rajab Ali functioned as his Mir Munshi and Rais Ram Dyal and Kishen Chand acted

as *Vakils* to the Lahore Durbar. The Diary gives an illuminating account of the events that happened immediately before the First Anglo-Sikh War.

(b) *Muqqadamat* Nos. 35-39

Detailed reports on some *thanadari* and *zamindari* cases between the two governments.

Group F.—Letters from Maharaja Ranjit Singh to Faqir Azizuddin Raza Ansari and Rai Kishen Chand in the form of a diary from 22 Phagun 1887 to 6 Jeth 1888 of the Vikrama Era (March 1830-May 1831 A.D.)

These contain detailed instructions issued by the Maharaja to both the functionaries in regard to their dealings with the British Government and proceedings of the meetings of the Agents of the Durbar with the British Political Agent at Ludhiana.

Group G.—(a) Rules and regulations about military organisation under the British.

(b) Draft treaties (Nos. 1 and 2) between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk.

(c) Copy of the questionnaire sent by Macnaughtan to Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

(d) Memoranda sent to Maharaja Kharak Singh from Peshawar by Rai Kishen Chand, *Vakil* and Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh, drawn in the form of a diary from 28 *Har* to 5 *Bhadon* 1896 of the Vikrama Era. It contains periodical reports on the progress of operations at Peshawar in pursuance of the Tripartite Treaty of 1838.

(e) Letters sent by Rai Kishen Chand to Maharaja Ranjit Singh arranged in the form of a diary from 15 *Bhadon* 1888 to 19 *Phagun* 1890 of the Vikrama Era (July 1831-March 1833 A.D.). These contain diplomatic despatches addressed by the Rai as *Vakil* to the Maharaja, detailed reports on political dealings with the British, and observations on outstanding events of the day.

(f) Over 50 family *sanads* and letters of commendation bound in a separate register.

Besides the above collection of documents, there are 40 fairly old manuscripts in Persian. They include translations of Sanskrit classics such as *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Rajawali*, *diwans* of celebrated poets, and treatises on grammar, prosody and epistolography.

The documents are expected to be extremely useful for a proper appraisal of the Lahore Durbar's point of view in our study of Anglo-Sikh relations, which seems to have been so far based exclusively on British records. The Durbar's point of view has, for want of original indigenous sources, been grossly misrepresented or not taken note of at all. With the help of the coherent and comprehensive records of the Bhandari collection, which has now been found, it might be possible to attempt a re-orientation of the study of the Anglo-Sikh relations.

In view of the great historical importance of the collection, early steps were taken to prepare a detailed inventory and Rai Inderjit Singh Bhandari was also requested to take effective measures for the proper preservation of the papers. As he later expressed his willingness to sell the entire collection to the Punjab Government, a committee was appointed to carefully examine and evaluate the papers and documents. After several weeks of arduous labour the Committee completed the appraisal of the valuable historical records and relics.

V. S. SURI

WEST BENGAL SECRETARIAT RECORD OFFICE

THE West Bengal Secretariat Record Office contains the archival assets of the Bengal Record Office and is housed in a portion of the ground floor of the historic buildings at Calcutta known as Writers' Buildings, which were erected in 1780 for the residence of the Writers or the junior servants of the East India Company and used for decades by the Fort William College. In 1878 the Secretariat of the Local Government was centralised in Writers' Buildings along with their collection of records. The location of the Record Office, which is in close proximity to the University of Calcutta, is eminently suited both for purposes of historical research and of administration. But the growing congestion in Writers' Buildings stands in the way of the development of the Record Office into a Central Repository for the entire State.

The Record Office, which is recognised as a Branch of the Education Department of the West Bengal Secretariat, is organised in two Sections, General and Technical. The Technical Section, which is responsible for the care and treatment of old records and making them accessible to students, is divided into two sub-sections, Current and Historical. The current records of the Secretariat Departments which are required to be preserved for more than 3 years are deposited in the Current Record Room. In the Historical Record Room are preserved the non-confidential records up to 1900 not only of the Government Departments, but also of the subordinate authorities of the pre-mutiny period, which have been thrown open to *bona fide* research students. Each of these sub-sections has a research room—a Departmental Search Room attached to the Current Section and a Literary Search Room attached to the Historical Section, access to which is subject to the approval of Government. There is a small Repair Section for reconditioning fragile papers and volumes. The staff consists of 33 assistants, 5 typists, 3 *mohurris*, 2 senior menders, 20 record suppliers and menders, 2 *daftries*, 11 peons and 8 *farashes*. The Keeper of Records is an *ex-officio* member of the West Bengal Regional Records Survey Committee, which is consulted by the State Government in important matters relating to preservation and publication of local records.

The importance of Bengal records lies in the fact that these include the Original Consultations of the Central Government in the Revenue and Judicial Departments up to 1834, which are regarded as the finest materials for the social and economic history of modern India. The earliest records in this repository are some Persian *sanads* and *parwanas* dating back to 1624. Although there were several

factories of the Company in Bengal early in the 17th century, the papers prior to 1770 are only fragmentary. The missing records of the 17th and 18th centuries are supposed to have been destroyed partly during the cyclone and flood of 1737 and partly during the sack of Calcutta in 1756. Their reconstruction is under consideration. The gaps in the later collection of records have already been filled up by obtaining copies from the India Office.

For the greater part of the 17th century the Agent and Council at Hooghly was subordinate to the Agency at Fort. St. George, but from 1700 the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal was independent of the Presidency of Fort St. George and carried on its business in direct correspondence with the Court of Directors in London. Under the Regulating Act of 1773 the Governor General and Council of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal had jurisdiction over the other Presidencies in matters relating to foreign policy. Under the Charter Act of 1833 the Governor General of Bengal became the Governor General of India and the overgrown Presidency of Fort William was divided into 2 distinct Presidencies *viz.*, the Presidency of Fort William and the Presidency of Agra, the Governor General of India remaining also the Governor of Bengal. But the Government of India and the Government of Bengal functioned through the same Secretariat till 1843 when the Indian Secretariat was completely separated from that of Bengal. The division of Bengal records appears to have been effected at this time.

The pre-mutiny records here consist of 10,292 bundles of original consultations and 11,839 proceedings volumes, while the post-mutiny records consist of 14,856 bundles of original consultations and 11,630 printed proceedings volumes. At the rate of 100 documents per bundle on an average the total number of documents comes to 25,14,800.

It may be appropriate now to say something about the early history of this archival repository. The necessity of a General Record Office at the Presidency was felt by the Court of Directors as early as 1819 in connection with the re-appointment of *kanungoes* with a view to form and preserve a digest of all information collected and transactions recorded by the *putwaries* and *kanungoes* regarding landed rights. Under Revenue Department Resolution dated 17 March 1820 a permanent record Committee was constituted in each District with the Judge and the Collector of the District and the *Zillah* and City Registrar as the Secretary, besides setting up a Presidency Committee for supervising the General Record Office at the Presidency and laying down general policies in respect of the mofussil records. The District Record Offices were required to forward to the General Record Office

lists of important papers preserved there, abstracts of highly useful document and authentic copies of the most important ones. The Presidency Committee was to publish and distribute to the Courts and Collectors documents embodying principles of the system they were to administer and of the laws they were to enforce.

The Presidency Committee was abolished on 1 April 1829 on the recommendation of the Civil Finance Committee and the charge of the General Record Office which was located in the General Treasury Buildings was given to the Chief Secretary, subject to the control of the Territorial Department. Two *daftries* and a *farash* were appointed for the care and upkeep of the records which were deposited in the General Record Office by the Secretariat Departments.

In 1860 the Civil Auditor of the Presidency made a suggestion to the Finance Commission for the destruction of all useless records in Government offices at Calcutta. The Commission recommended the formation of an Expert Committee for the examination of the old records in the different Government offices, the weeding of papers having no statistical or historical value, and preservation of the rest in a General Record Room. In Government of India Financial Department Resolution No. 5177 dated 19 April 1861 a Committee of 3 members was appointed for "superintending the scheme of destruction of useless records in Public offices and arranging for the papers selected for preservation (being) bound and catalogued and placed in a separate record room accessible to all persons wishing to consult them". In 1862 the Records Committee issued a circular to the Divisional Commissioners enquiring about the papers regarding the old factories of the East India Company within their respective jurisdiction with a view to their removal to Calcutta, and recommended the calendaring of all proceedings in different departments. In 1865 the Records Committee recommended the concentration of the papers selected for preservation in some permanent offices of record under responsible Record Keepers instead of a Central Muniment Room, with some stringent rules for the protection of valuable records, re-casting and printing of indexes to the proceedings, and for printing the general letters and printing by individuals selections from records for sale below cost price. Arrangements were to be made for the revision of the indexes to proceedings, and also for the printing of these indexes and of the general letters and of selections from records. In lieu of a Central Muniment Room they recommended a Government Library to be formed with copies of publications on records. The heads of offices were asked to state the period up to which they required their records for current work so that the older records could be removed to the Permanent Offices of Record or

destroyed if they were of no value. The Local Government did not accept the plan of the Permanent Offices of Record. In 1901 at the instance of Mr. S. C. Hill, Officer-in-Charge of the Records of the Government of India, the particulars of the pre-1800 records at the District headquarters were obtained from the Divisional Commissioners with a view to their centralisation.

In Hill's Memorandum dated 21 July 1902, prepared at the request of the India Office, the unsatisfactory state of the records in the Record Rooms at the three Presidency towns was noticed, and the centralisation of the Company's records in a single building constructed on scientific principles at each of the Presidency towns was advocated. In case the proposal was not acceptable on grounds of cost and the absence of indigenous historical interest, it was proposed to prepare a list of the collections in each province to enable the India Office to examine their nature and to remove to England the originals where copies did not exist in the India Office, substituting printed copies for use in India. In the light of the recommendations made in the memorandum, the Local Government appointed Mr. A. P. Muddiman, I.C.S., as special officer to examine and select the records to be destroyed and also those which were to be printed with a table of contents and an index. Besides this, the Government expressed the view that the revival of the Record Commission of 1861-69 was desirable to save many petty references to them.

Mr. Muddiman was on special duty from 16 February 1904 to 28 June 1904. He made a survey of the pre-mutiny records in the Secretariat, the Board of Revenue and selected District Record Rooms, prepared notes on the records therein, made selections of the documents to be printed and to be presented to the Victoria Memorial Hall for exhibition, made lists of the proceedings volumes and manuscript indexes for the purpose of classifying the papers and compiling a reliable catalogue, and the revenue proceedings of the Murshidabad Council and the earliest letter copy books of Chittagong, Dacca and Midnapore. In his report dated 9 March 1905 he recommended the amalgamation of the pre-mutiny records of the Secretariat and the Board of Revenue and wanted them to be made accessible for purposes of research. In Government of India, Home Department, letter No. 213 dated 28 January 1905 some directions drawn up by Mr. Wilson, the Officer-in-Charge of the Records of the Government of India, for the storage, arrangement and preservation of Government records were circulated. These were given effect to in the Provincial record rooms and it was observed that the press-listing and calendaring of historical records were preferable to *extenso* printing and that non-current records should not be destroyed.

Mr. S. R. Hignell, who was on special duty from 1 April 1905 to 22 May 1905, had useless papers and duplicates sorted out for destruction. Mr. F. B. Bradley Birt was next on special duty from 2 January 1907 to 1 April 1907. He recommended re-arrangement of the racks in the Secretariat Record Room so as to give more air and light, flattening of old files, compilation of a printed catalogue and preparation of skeleton subject indexes, and he prepared 2 volumes of press-lists of revenue records. It was now apparent to the Local Government that a whole-time Officer-in-Charge for the Record Room was essential for some length of time to have the vast programme of work carried through and a definite scheme prepared. The permanent staff of the Secretariat Record Room then consisted of only a lower division assistant called the Record Keeper, a junior assistant called the Assistant Record Keeper, 9 record suppliers and 6 peons. S. Srinath Chakraborty, the then Assistant Manager of Forms, was appointed on special duty for the re-organization of the Record Room on 15 January 1909 and he was given in addition to the existing personnel a temporary staff of 10 clerks, 1 steno-typist and 2 *daftries*. After 4 months the Special Officer's work was examined by Mr. McAlpin and on his recommendation the temporary staff was retained for the examination and arrangement of records and consolidation of indexes for the period 1859-1908. The permanent post of a Keeper of Records was created from 15 January 1910 with the Government of India's sanction. The post of the Assistant Keeper was upgraded and an experienced assistant of Imperial Records Department appointed. The rules for the management of the Secretariat Record Room were framed after the rules of the Imperial Records Department and it was laid down that the Keeper should work under the direct control of the Under-Secretary, Political Department. As the question of the amalgamation of the pre-mutiny records of the Local Government with those of the Government of India was still pending, no action was taken to centralise those records and make them accessible for research purposes. The Government of India at this time raised the question of the amalgamation of the non-current records of the Local and the Central Government over 10 years old. The Local Government replied in 1911 that the Provincial records being required for administrative purposes, their removal from the control of the Local Government was impracticable, that the proposed amalgamation would involve the loss of local interest and local knowledge, and that the local Keeper of Records was perfectly competent to look after the historical records and make them accessible to students with the help and advice of the Imperial Records Officer. The proposal of the Government of India was dropped. The pre-mutiny records of the Local Government and

the Board of Revenue were amalgamated in 1915 and deposited in Blocks IV & V of Writers' Buildings which came to form the Bengal Historical Record Room. Rev. W. K. Firminger was authorised to edit selections from District records and in 1913 a temporary staff of 4 assistants was entertained for the compilation of press-lists of the earliest revenue records. In Public (Records) Despatch dated 14 February 1913 it was suggested that the calendaring of historical records, which according to the Royal Commission on Public Records of England and Wales was too slow, too elaborate and too costly, should not be taken up till the report of an Advisory Committee appointed by the Master of the Rolls was available. In Public (Records) Despatch dated 28 November 1913 it was stated that the said Advisory Committee would not lay down any general rules for calendaring and that each class of documents should be considered on its own merits. In 1914 the Press-list Section was made permanent and the following year an additional staff of 6 assistants, 1 *daftri*, 2 *jamadars*, 2 peons, 8 *farashes*, 1 *daftri* for the post-mutiny records was made permanent. At the same time the number of records suppliers was reduced from 9 to 6.

In 1916, in pursuance of the Memorandum of Sir William Foster on the Second Report of the Royal Commission on Public Records, the Government of India laid down that in all Government publications the names and addresses of the agents in India and abroad should be printed on the back of the half title, that the press-lists should approximate to a descriptive catalogue or inventory of the records, that an index should be prepared simultaneously with the press-lists, and that calendaring should in no way interfere with the more important work of press-listing. A copy of the instructions drawn up by the Officer-in-Charge of the Records of the Government of India regarding indexing was circulated, and the preparation of a catalogue of the District Record Rooms and the printing of the older District records were recommended. A detailed catalogue or inventory of the pre-mutiny records of the Secretariat was accordingly prepared and printed for official use. In 1919 the Government of India decided in consultation with the Local Governments and in the light of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Public Records of England and Wales that the best method of making the records accessible to the public would be the preparation of a list of the volumes and bundles contained in the Record Offices and of a descriptive hand-book to their general contents, and the calendaring or reprinting in full of certain specified classes of documents. Greater attention was also to be devoted to maintain the manuscript indexes and complete them wherever necessary. The records to be calendared were to be

determined by the Indian Historical Records Commission, which was constituted at the same time. Only pre-1702 records and those likely to perish very soon were to be printed *in extenso*. It was also recommended that the publications of the different Record Offices should be freely exchanged. It was further proposed that the rules governing the public use and inspection of records be brought to the notice of the Professors of History, and that annual reports of the Record Offices should be submitted to the Local Governments. The same year the temporary staff engaged in 1917 for the re-organization of pre-mutiny records and the staff for the printing of records were made permanent. In 1922 an abstract catalogue of the pre-mutiny records was compiled and published.

In 1920 the Indian Historical Records Commission recommended the calendaring of the General Letters to and from the Court of Directors. But the Local Government decided to prepare Select Indexes to General Letters of the different Departments, which were published in 1925-27. The activities of the Records Office had to be materially curtailed from 1924 owing to the drastic reduction in staff as a measure of curtailment of State expenditure and it was not possible to recover the retrenched posts till 1939. The Search Room Rules, which were framed in 1919, were revised in 1927 on the advice of Prof. R. B. Ramsbotham, the first Hony. Adviser on Records. In 1926 the Indian Historical Records Commission recommended that the Bengal Record Office should resume press-listing of Revenue Records, which was thereafter carried on slowly with the depleted staff as opportunity offered. In 1935 an abstract catalogue of the post-mutiny records in this Record Office was prepared and printed for official use. In 1937 narrative abstracts of the General Letters were prepared and printed. In 1939 a catalogue of books in the Record Office Library was compiled and printed, and work on a Hand-book of pre-Mutiny Records was continued.

On the outbreak of war the work of the Record Office was slowed down and the pre-mutiny records were removed to Berhampore as a measure of precaution against air raids. An *ad-hoc* Bengal Regional Records Survey Committee was constituted by the Indian Historical Records Commission on the termination of the war for the exploration and preservation of historical manuscripts in private custody. This was replaced by a permanent Committee appointed by the State Government in July 1951. The Hand-book of pre-Mutiny Records was completed in 1945 by Mr. M. M. Stuart, I.C.S., and it was printed for official use after the partition of Bengal.

In October 1951 the administrative control of the Record Office was transferred from the Home Department to the Education Department with a view to re-organize the Office on modern lines.

In 1953-54 the pre-mutiny records were brought back from Berhampore to Writers' Buildings, Calcutta. The Regional Committee has undertaken to edit selections from the District records and to compile a descriptive list of the *Sadr Diwani*, *Sadr Nizamat* and Supreme Court records.

The question of developing the Secretariat Record Office into a Central Record Office with the non-current records of the High Court, Departments of Government, Districts, Divisional and Sub-divisional offices is under consideration.

It now remains to give an account of the important collections of records preserved in this repository. This may begin with the oldest series, *i.e.* the Persian *sanads* and *parwanas*. These were issued by Asaf Khan, *Vazir* of the Mughal Empire (1617-27); Mir Jumla (Muazzam Khan), *Subadar* of Bengal (1660-64); Asafud-Daulah (Asad Khan), *Vakil-i-Mutlaq* (Agent General) to Emperor Bahadur Shah (1707-12); Qamrud-Din Husain Khan, Nizamul-Mulk Asaf Jah and Abul Mansur Khan, *Vazirs* under Emperor Muhammad Shah (1719-48); Alaud-Daulah Nasir Jang Jafar Khan Nusari *alias* Murshid Kuli Khan, *Diwan* (1701), *Naib Nazim* (1707) and *Nazim* (1713); Shujaud-Daulah Asad Jang Shujaud-Din Muhammad Khan, *Naib Nazim* (1713-24) and *Nazim* (1725); Alaud-Daulah Sarfaraz Khan, *Nazim* (1739); Mahabat Jang Alivardi Khan, *Nazim* (1740-56); Sirajud-Daulah, *Naib Nazim* (1754-56) and *Nazim* (1756-57); Mir Muhammad Jafar Khan, *Nawab Nazim* (1757-60 and 1763-65); Mir Muhammad Jafar Khan's son Mir Sadiq Ali Khan (Miran); Mir Muhammad Kasim Khan, *Nawab Nazim* (1760-63); Najmud-Daulah (Najmud-Din Ali Khan), *Nawab Nazim* (1765); Saifud-Daulah (Najabat Ali Khan), *Nawab Nazim* (1766-70); Mubarakud-Daulah (Mubarak Ali Khan), *Nawab Nazim* (1770); Nawab Muzaffar Jang (Syed Muhammad Riza Khan), *Naib Nazim* (1765-70) and *Naib Diwan* (1770).

There are also 32 bundles of original *kabuliyats*, *kistbandies*, surety bonds, *ikrarnamas*, *tip-patras* (hand notes), *daul-bandobasts*, *rozina* and *amdani* papers in Persian and Bengali executed by *zamindars* and *talukdars* paying revenue direct to the *Khalisa* during the period 1067-1247 B.S. There are some original *sanads* in Persian assigning rent from lands to charitable purposes during the period from 1154 to 1251 *Hijri*. There are 95 volumes of *Baze Zamin Sanad Registers* containing copies of *sanads* for *Brahmottara*, *Mohturan*, *Piran*, *Chiraghi* lands etc.

There are also 10 bundles of original Dutch *pattas* relating to settlement of lands at Chinsurah from 1702 to 1827, and 75 volumes of vernacular records of the Danish Government of Fredericksnagore (Serampore) from 1804 to 1845.

This office has preserved 202 volumes of General Letters to the Court of Directors and 129 volumes from the Court. Of these, Commercial General Letters from the Court of Directors are the oldest dating from 1765. The Revenue series dates from 1777, Judicial series from 1793, Public or General from 1835, Ecclesiastical from 1836, Railways from 1845, Public Works from 1856.

The capture of Calcutta by Sirajud-Daulah in 1756 impressed upon the Governor and those members who had retired to Fulta the necessity of maintaining secrecy over transactions of a political nature. With this end in view, they formed a Secret Committee of four members which sat for the first time on 22 August 1756 and continued till 10 December 1756. In the meantime, the impending war with France led the Court of Directors to appoint a Select Committee "to transact affairs with the country Government, neighbouring powers, also with the French, Dutch and other Europeans and in general to take such measures as shall best conduce to the protection and preservation of the Company's estates, rights and privileges in Bengal". The Committee consisted of the President, the Commander-in-Chief when in Bengal and three senior members of the Council. It replaced the Secret Committee and continued from 21 February 1757 to 28 December 1762. This office has the proceedings volumes of the Select Committee for 1758.

Immediately after the Battle of Plassey the district of 24-Parganas was given to Robert Clive, and in 1760 the districts of Chittagong, Burdwan and Midnapore were ceded to the Company. In 1763 the Chief of the factory at Cossimbazar was appointed Resident at the Durbar according to the terms of a treaty with Mir Jafar. There are 3 volumes of Letter Copy Books of the Resident and the supervisors on revenue matters from 1769 to 1772. There is also a Letter Copy Book of the Chief of the factory at Patna for 1765-66. In the meantime the business of the Council was divided into two departments—Public and Secret. The Public Department was to carry on affairs relating to shipping, revenues, fortifications, appointments, etc., while the Secret Department was responsible for military plans, the country correspondence and all transactions with the country governments. Both the departments were under the same Secretary. The Secret Department was abolished in 1765 on the appointment of Lord Clive as President and Governor with the command of the Company's military forces, and the Select Committee was revived with five members. After the grant of the *Diwani*, a distribution of

work between the Committee and the Council was made. The former was to make treaties, negotiations and alliances, and direct everything relating to war, defence, military affairs, settlement of revenues and their collection and correspondence with country powers; and the latter was to direct investments, manage Calcutta lands and parganas and collect the revenues of Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong. In 1768 the Council was vested with the sole power to conclude treaties, direct military affairs, and control all disbursements of money. The Council was to form itself into a Secret Department on all occasions where secrecy was requisite. The powers of the Select Committee were further defined in 1768 and it was ultimately dissolved in 1774. There was also a Secret and Separate Department to deal with special questions arising from time to time which continued from 1761 to 1811. There was further a Secret Department of Inspection created by the Select Committee with the object of enquiring into the state of the several departments and propose reforms. It was also known as the Board of Inspection and came in 1786 to be known as Secret Department of Reform. From 1788 to August 1790 it was called Secret and Separate Department. The Secretariat Record office has 3 volumes of the Select Committee proceedings for 1766, 1767 and 1770.

In 1770 a Controlling Council of Revenue succeeded the Chief at Patna and the Resident at Murshidabad. In 1771 the Controlling Council of Revenue was formed by order of the Court of Directors at Calcutta with the President and four members. In 1772 the Fort William Council formed itself into a Council of Revenue, which superseded the Controlling Council. In 1771 the Directors had decided that the Company should stand forth as the *Diwan*, and the Governor formed a Committee of the Council with four members to settle the land revenue of the various districts on the spot. This was known as the Committee of Circuit and worked during 1772-73. A quinquennial settlement of revenue was made, and collectors were appointed in each district to supervise both the revenue and judicial administration. As the arrangement did not prove satisfactory, six Provincial Councils of Revenue were created in 1773 at Calcutta, Dacca, Dinajpur, Patna, Murshidabad and Burdwan. In 1781 the Provincial Councils were abolished and a Committee of Revenue was set up in Calcutta which eventually was made the Board of Revenue in 1786. This office has complete records of these revenue agencies.

From 1775 revenue matters were dealt with by the Governor General in Council in the Revenue Department. From 1790 a separate branch for judicial matters was started and proceedings for salt, opium and customs were kept separate till 1793 when the Judicial Department was created and salt, opium and customs were transferred from the

Board of Revenue to the Board of Trade under the Public (or General) Department. There are also separate proceedings for *Sair* (1790-1805), Wards (1790-1805), Grain (1794-1803) and Mint (1795-1805). These were combined in the same series from 1805. In 1809 Customs was transferred to the Board of Revenue. There are *Khalisa* proceedings from 1776 to 1780. In 1815 the Departments of Revenue, Finance and Separate Revenue were combined into the Territorial Department which continued up to 1834 when Finance was transferred to the General Department.

In 1828 Miscellaneous Revenue Proceedings concerning irrigation, roads, bridges, *abkari* etc., were started, and they continued till 1841. In 1839 the Government of Bengal took over the revenue and judicial administration of Upper Assam excluding the Government Tea Tracts, and the Tea Tracts were transferred to the Government of Bengal in 1840. Proceedings concerning these areas are to be found in the repository.

In the Judicial Department created in 1793 separate proceedings were kept till 1816 for civil and criminal justice and later separate proceedings were kept for the Western and the Lower Provinces. In 1841 the proceedings were combined to form one series. The General proceedings of the Local Government start from 1834 and deal with education, emigration, post office, medical matters, and political affairs. The Ecclesiastical proceedings also start from 1834. Education proceedings were separated in 1842. The Political proceedings were separate from 1834 to 1844. Financial proceedings of the Local Government start from 1857. Prior to this the Government of India controlled the financial operations of Bengal. Public Works proceedings start from 1854 as also those of the Chief Engineer, Lower Provinces. Railway proceedings were separate from 1845 to 1855 and then merged in the proceedings of the Public Works Department. Proceedings for Revenue, Public Works and Judicial were separate for the years 1855-56. Marine matters were dealt with in the General Department till 1838 when Marine proceedings were separated.

The proceedings of the Board of Revenue constituted in 1786 are the most important for students of social and economic history of Bengal. From 1788 the Board had separate proceedings for Land Revenue, Miscellaneous Revenue, Salt, Customs and Opium. In 1790 Customs, Salt and Opium were transferred to the Board of Trade and separate proceedings started for *Sair*, Judicial matters, etc. In 1822 three Boards of Revenue, one each for the Lower, Western and Central Provinces, were constituted and Bhagalpur and Purnea districts were transferred to the Board of Commissioners for Bihar and Banaras.

By Regulation I of 1829 the three Boards of Revenue were replaced by Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit acting in their revenue capacity under a *Sadr* or Chief Board of Revenue for the whole Presidency. These changes took effect from 1 March 1829. After that date the Members of the *Sadr* Board on deputation administered the Upper or North-Western Provinces and recorded their proceedings separately. Regulation X of 1831, which came into force on 1 January 1832, completed the separation by establishing a *Sadr* Board of Revenue for the North-Western Provinces at Allahabad. Thereafter the *Sadr* Board at Calcutta was concerned only with the Lower Provinces. In 1850, by Act 44 of 1850, the *Sadr* Board of Revenue absorbed the Board of Customs, Salt and Opium and was afterwards known as the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces.

There were Police proceedings of the Board of Revenue from 1794 to 1797 in connection with the assessment and collection of the annual Police tax, Post Office proceedings from 1820 to 1829, Sundarbans proceedings from 1825 to 1829, Settlement proceedings from 1837 to 1843 and the proceedings of deputations to Pataspur (Calcutta) in 1813-14, to Murshidabad in 1824, Chittagong in 1840, Cherapunji in 1857-59, Western Provinces in 1829 and to Bauleah (Rajshahi) in 1834-35. There are 3 volumes of the Controlling Committee of Commerce proceedings for 1771-73 and 2 volumes of the Board of Customs for 1773-85. The next important proceedings are of the Board of Trade, 1774-1835. The Board kept separate proceedings for Customs for the period 1793-1809, for Salt for the period 1793-1819, Opium for the period 1793-1819, Hemp for the period 1801-15 and Indigo for the period 1811-12. There was a Board of Customs, Salt and Opium for the period 1819-50. There is a bundle of records of the Board of Commissioners, Ceded Provinces of Banaras and Allahabad, 1801-03. The Board of Revenue had separate proceedings for the Ceded and Conquered Provinces, 1803-10. There are also the proceedings of the Commissioners in Bihar and Banaras, 1816-22.

In 1823 a General Committee of Public Instruction was constituted in pursuance of Territorial Department Resolution dated 17 July 1823 for ascertaining the state of education in the Bengal Presidency and for suggesting measures for the better instruction of the people. The Education Department took over the general and financial business of the Committee in 1842 and the Committee was maintained as a Council of Education under the General Department. The proceedings of the Committee throw considerable light on the state of education in schools and colleges during this period.

There is a volume of printed proceedings of the Governors of the Native Hospital dated 20 May 1835 relative to the establishment of

a Fever Hospital for the relief of the natives together with notes relating to the state of Calcutta and its suburbs, and 5 volumes of the proceedings of 1835-40 of the General Committee of the Fever Hospital and Municipal Improvements. The Committee submitted a printed report on 7 January 1840 with 6 appendices. The Committee considered the question of drainage of the salt water lakes near Calcutta.

There are 13 volumes of correspondence of the Railway Commissioner appointed in 1853 for the purchase of lands required for the East India Railway.

By Revenue Department Resolution dated 1 February 1834 a Committee was constituted by the Governor General in Council for the introduction of tea cultivation in India. Seed, as also persons skilled in the culture and manufacture of tea came from China. The experimental establishment was made over to the Assam Tea Company in 1840. This office has 8 volumes of records of this Committee.

There are 33 volumes of records of the Controller of Surveys, 1851-55. On the recommendation of the Committee of Circuit the *Khalisa* or the head revenue office was removed from Murshidabad to Calcutta in September 1772. The arrangement was that the *Khalisa* should consist of a member of the Council, each member sitting in rotation, to be entitled Superintendent of the *Khalisa*, together with a native officer with the title of *Ray Rayan*. The duties of this body consisted in receiving and examining accounts transmitted from all over Bengal, in comparing remittances with *chalans*, in realising revenue from farmers who had the privilege of paying revenue at Calcutta, and in preparing grants and *sanads*, etc. On the constitution of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Calcutta in November 1773 it was thought unnecessary to retain the post of the Superintendent of the *Khalisa*. But in the Revenue Board's proceedings, dated 23 December 1774, it was considered inconvenient to do away with the *Khalisa* entirely and Warren Hastings proposed the creation of a new officer to be called Superintendent of the *Khalisa* Records. His proposal was accepted with slight modifications. This officer had to enquire into and submit reports on petitions for the Revenue Department under instructions dated 14 January 1775.

On the formation of the Committee of Revenue in 1781 the office of the Superintendent of the *Khalisa* Records was abolished. The revenue functions of the *Khalisa* were taken over by the Committee, while the duties of the Superintendent, viz., the making of enquiries and the preparation of reports on petitions were continued by the officer called Preparer of Reports for the Revenue Department who addressed his letters from the *Khalisa*. This office of the Preparer of Reports

for the Revenue Department, created in February 1781, was abolished from 1 May 1793 according to the Judicial Department Resolution of 29 March 1793. From June 1786, when the Board of Revenue was established he corresponded with the Board.

There are 3 volumes of records of the Commissioner of Law-suits (1777-79) for the preparation of materials for the Company's Attorney and Standing Council.

There are 9 bundles of records of the Committee of Grain constituted by the Committee of Revenue in pursuance of General Department letter dated 16 October 1773 to superintend and regulate the sale, distribution and price of grain throughout the Company's Provinces during the period of scarcity. There are 31 volumes of records of the Clerk and Inspector of Public Granaries, 1795-1813.

There are 19 volumes of records of the Controller of Salt, 1780-81 and Controller of Salt Districts, 1781-93.

There are 51 volumes of records of the Presidency Committee of Records, 1820-29.

There are 33 volumes of 'Decision Books' of the Special Commissioners, 1829-53, for the speedy disposal of appeals from the decisions of revenue authorities in case of default in payment of revenue.

There are records of the Sundarbans Commissioner for the period 1829-58 regarding the reclamation of the Sundarbans in Presidency Division.

There are 8 Copy-Books of letters of the Superintendent of the Salt *Chauki*, Calcutta, 1831-58 and 182 volumes of the Controller of Salt *Chaukis*, 1846-48.

There is one volume of records of the Reporter of External Commerce under the Board of Trade, 1802-19. There is also a volume of General Report of the Reporter of External Commerce to the Governor of Fort St. George.

There are 10 volumes of the weekly publication of the Exchange Committee containing the price-current of the staple articles of Bengal, China, Java, Sumatra, Malabar Coast, Persian Gulf, Europe and America, 1820-58.

The account given above will give an idea of the wealth of materials in the West Bengal Secretariat Record Office on which research may be undertaken by students of history.

SELECTIONS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HENRY RUSSELL WITH N. B. EDMONSTONE*

(1) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, Sutton Park, 3 January 1824*

“My dear Sir,

I set too much value on your good opinion to remain silent when my claims to it are arraigned. I have seen Adam’s Minute suspending Sotheby; and the questions proposed to Palmer at Hyderabad. As far as I am concerned, I regret that Palmer hesitated to answer them. Neither in that nor in any other instance, does my conduct stand in need of concealment. I have nothing to fear but from perversion or exaggeration. I desire only that the facts of my conduct may be known as they occurred, and that I may not be judged by events in which I had no share, and over which I could have had no controul.

Soon after I went to Hyderabad, now 13 years ago, I placed a sum of Money in the hands of Mr. S. H. Russell, who had been with the Madras Engineers, an old friend of mine, to be employed by him for me. In so doing the thought of impropriety never suggested itself to my mind. I conceived, as he did, that his concerns were personal and private, and that he was acting on my behalf, as one private friend acts for another. He and Palmer managed this money together, and it never entered into my contemplation, or theirs, nor could it have entered into that of anybody who knew the facts as they then existed, that their situation was such as to constitute them a house of business. There was no project or semblance of such a kind; no plan or agreement; nor any of the conditions or ingredients which belong to a regular establishment. Had there been, or could I have foreseen that such an establishment was to be the ultimate result, it would have been impossible for me to have the most remote participation in it. The progress towards this result, when it did occur, was so slow as to be imperceptible, especially to me, who knew nothing of the transactions in which their money was laid out, and who never saw a book, or an Account, or thought of making a single inquiry on the Subject. When however I did see that their concerns were assuming such a shape, I determined to withdraw my money; and the abruptness with which I did so produced a rupture with Palmer and Mr. Russell, which was never made up. It was then only that Palmer resolved to set up regularly in business; and establishment was then for the first time framed by him; a deed of copartnership was entered into; our

*This is the fifth instalment of the correspondence of Henry Russell. The earlier instalments appeared in *The Indian Archives* Vol. VIII, Nos. 1, 2 and Vol. IX Nos. 1, 2.

Govt. was applied to to sanction their concerns ; and all those arrangements were made which belong to the formation of a house of business. Adam talks of a secret understanding and systematic league between the Residency and the house. I most solemnly deny the charge. Where has the colour of a pretext for it been discovered ? There is not one single act of my public conduct which can be referred to such a Source. The Members of the House were surely the most competent judges of my sentiments and proceedings towards them. Far from looking upon me as friendly to their transactions, they considered me as absolutely hostile to them; and Palmer formed his connexion with Sir W. Rumbold for the express purpose of counteracting the opposition he apprehended from me, and strengthening the house with the interest of Lord Hastings. My rupture with Palmer and the hostility he attributed to me were notorious at Hyderabad. They were known to the Minister, and the Natives generally, as well as to the Members of our Society. They were topics of common conversation. Palmer himself was constantly complaining of my counter action, and every step, by which their interests were advanced, was taken without any concert with me, and under the influence of a power above the reach of my controul. The Sanction of Govt. to the original establishment was obtained by John Palmer in Calcutta without my knowledge even; it was only as a matter of form that the official papers afterwards passed through me; and when the Document was procured by them, legalising their transactions with the Nizam's Govt., the Memorial of the House was written in great part by Lord Hastings himself and was afterwards communicated to me in his Lordship's own handwriting. It may be alleged that I ought to have foreseen the objectionable influence which the House was to acquire, and that I ought to have opposed it in its origin. Though I certainly did object to the influence which the house derived from the connexion of one of the partners with the Gov. Gen. and did everything in my power to confine it to its proper channel, I did not foresee the peculiar circumstances which were eventually to arise. Even if they had been foreseen by me, with what chance of success could I have undertaken to prevent them ? If Metcalfe, with all the advantages of actual experience on his side, failed in his opposition while Lord Hastings remained in India, what could I have done, with no other arguments but those derived from speculation and predicted evil ?

I have heard that my conduct in the instance of the last Loan has been objected to. If it had been known what my conduct in that case really was, a different judgment would have been formed of it. I had no share whatever in the formation or advancement of that project. When the Papers relating to it were officially transmitted to me by the

Minister, with an earnest entreaty for my Support, I refused even to forward them to Govt. The communication was then made directly to Lord Hastings, and he desired that the papers should be transmitted to Calcutta. It was for his Lordship, and not for me, to determine whether he would or would not give the Sanction which was required of him. The Act was one which belonged exclusively to the Authority of Govt., and it would have been a violation of my duty to refuse compliance with the desire of the Gov. Gen. that I would lay before him a set of official papers which were intended for his consideration. With the Merits or Particulars of the Loan, be they what they may, I have to this day no acquaintance, but what I derived from the Papers which passed through me Officially. The Measure was still recent, and I believe incomplete, when I quitted Hyderabad; and if as I have recently heard, the Loan has proved in its real effect to be different from its professed Conditions, I can only most Solemnly protest that any such difference was utterly unknown to me. The Minister, I thought might safely be trusted with the Management of his own affairs; and I never could have suspected that he would be a party to a measure, of which the operation was to be injurious to himself. As long as the Minister was disposed to borrow, and the House was disposed to lend, neither of them making any complaint of the other, I could not arrive at a knowledge of the details of their transactions, without a constant inquisition, which, even if it had been practicable, I should not have felt myself justified in exercising. I am not responsible for the existence of a house, which grew up under a protection superior to my authority, nor for the conduct of affairs with which I neither had nor have any acquaintance. But notwithstanding all that has since occurred, and all the feelings which now prevail on the subject, I still maintain that a mercantile establishment, framed and conducted on the principles which this House originally professed, would have been beneficial both to the Nizam's Govt. and to the interest of our own Commerce. In one memorable instance, even where I thought our own honour and security were at stake, I have been censured for interfering too much with the authority of the Nizam's Govt.; it now appears that I am to be measured by an opposite standard, and censured for not interfering where we had nothing at stake.

Before a contrast is drawn, to my detriment, between my measures and those of my successor, it is only just to consider whether the state of circumstances which has occasioned his measures, had any existence when I was called upon to act. I protest most peremptorily against any allegation of the disorders having grown up under me, while the remedies were left to be applied by him. In the very last

despatch which Sydenham wrote to Lord Minto, he stated his conviction 'that during the reign of the present Nizam no improvement could be expected, unless the administration of the Country were placed under the control of the Resident; that the disorders of the present Govt. were too deeply rooted and too widely extended to admit of any partial reform, and that it was therefore unfortunate, that the only effectual remedy that could be applied, should be so much at variance with our Views and Policy'. This then was the recorded condition of the Nizam's affairs when I was appointed to the Residency. Disorders of such a character are never stationary. They are progressive in their very nature; and far from admitting that their increase was promoted by my measures, I have always considered myself entitled to merit for holding the Govt. together as I did, and making its resources efficiently applicable to the purposes of our alliance. Notwithstanding its decrepit condition, I contrived to raise and equip the first military Force it had ever had, worthy of the name; and I not only kept it faithful to its engagements with us, but at a crisis the most momentous to our interests, I enabled it for the first time, to take an active and vigorous share in the War, and to contribute in many essential instances to its prosperous termination. Among the various Govts. which were allied to us when we entered on the operations against the Pindarries, if there was any one more likely than all others to seize the first opportunity of taking part against us, that one was unquestionably the Nizam. When the defection of the Paishwah and the Rajah of Nagpore occurred, our most prominent public officers looked with alarm towards Hyderabad. It was confidently pronounced that the Nizam was already a party to the League, and was about to declare himself openly against us. If he had done so, and if his country and Troops and Resources had been thrown out of our Scale into that of the Enemy, I will not assert that the final result of the War would have been different, but I certainly will say that the duration and expense and dangers would have been infinitely increased. Let the conduct of the Nizam's Govt. during this War be compared with its conduct in former Wars, and with the conduct which other Native Govts. have at all times pursued towards us; and then let my merits be tried by the result. My services were not the less valuable, because they were silent in their progress, and pacific in their effect. If the comparison is to be made by those who are conversant with the facts, I do not fear any contrast between my administration and that of either my Predecessors or my Successor. It is not true that our Govt. was kept in ignorance by me of the real condition of the Nizam's affairs. I omitted no opportunity of exposing the disorders which prevailed in them, and on two particular occasions exhibited to Lord

Hastings as strong a picture as could well be drawn of the evils and abuses which pervaded every branch of the system. It was Sydenham's conviction, as it was mine, that our Govt. would never consent to interfere to the extent, in which only its interference could be effective; but I promoted the measure of reform as soon as I saw a prospect of its being adopted. My original scheme was founded on the employment of European Agents to superintend the proceedings of the Nizam's local officers. But Metcalfe, who was at that time Secretary, urged me to abandon it, as one to which our Government would never listen. My object was to promote not the best possible, but the best practicable plan, and therefore, instead of adhering to a scheme which I was told would be rejected, I proposed the best which seemed to be consistent with the character and circumstances of our policy at the time. When Metcalfe himself undertook the duty, he discovered the accuracy of my original opinion; and he has since been obliged to adopt, as the basis of his system, the very measure to which he objected as a feature in mine.

I have reason to believe that the most exaggerated rumours have been propagated of the amount of my Fortune, in order to support the allegations which have been advanced against me. When I quitted India, I deposited the whole of my Fortune with the Acct. Gen. and Sub. Treasurer, and when the Loan was paid off last year, it was remitted to me by them in a single Bill on the C[ourt] of D[irectors] for £ 85,000. This, I solemnly assure you, is the utmost sum I do, or ever did possess; and this would not be the limit of the Fortune of a Resident at Hyderabad, who was desirous of making money, and was not scrupulous as to the means of making it.

I cannot but feel that there is much hardship in the predicament in which I am placed. My Successor in office, and the Govt. in India, from whatever causes, and with whatever motives, seemed resolved to heap every sort of allegation upon me; and I fear that their statements have not found unwilling ears in England. Metcalfe, in the heat of his conflict with Lord Hastings and the House, does not appear to have considered on whom his blows might fall; and Adam and his colleagues, in order to vindicate themselves from their acquiescence in his Lordship's inclinations, are anxious to transfer as much of the blame as they can from their own shoulders upon mine. The proceedings which have been held have been secret and inquisitorial. I have had no opportunity of explaining what was doubtful or denying what was false. It is only just now that I have seen the two papers mentioned in the beginning of this letter, and the knowledge of them even I owe to chance.

My first anxiety is to prevent you from supposing that I have, in any instance, done that which would deprive me of your friendship and esteem. My next wish is to consult you as to the course it may be most advisable for me to pursue; and this I do with the less hesitation now that you are not actually a Member of the Direction. I have for the last three months been constantly occupied with the tedious and alarming illness of our only boy, which is still unabated; but if you will appoint any time when you will be at leisure, I will run up to Town to see you.

Believe me, my dear Sir, Yours most sincerely,

H. Russell."

(2) *N. B. Edmonstone to H. Russell, Sutton Park, Potton, Bedfordshire, London, 5 January 1824*

"My Dear Russell,

I read your letter (which reached me late at night on the 3rd) with deep Interest. It is not my intention in this letter to enter into any detail on the subject. This only I will say that your character and conduct require no vindication with me. I believe both to have been highly honourable in all situations. I have not had access to the despatches from India relative to Hyderabad and I knew not even of Adam's minute till I read your letter. I am therefore very imperfectly acquainted with the transactions....."

Edmonstone sent Russell's letter to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors and they came to see him. They regretted that, according to the rules, they were not allowed to take any action on other than official documents."

(3) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, Sutton Park, 6 January 1824*

"My dear Sir,

I thank you for your prompt and friendly attention to my letter, and for the judicious purpose to which you applied it. If persons in public stations were always sure that their minds did not receive any impressions, on one side of a question, except from official papers, it would be unquestionably just in them to withhold their attention from any but official papers on the other side. But as that cannot be the case, it is unreasonable to tell a man, who is defending himself, that he must be confined to the strict limits of an official statement, when private conversation and correspondence, and personal slander, and common rumour, have all been allowed, in every shape,

and through every avenue, to operate against him. I have no doubt however that my letter has had its effect with the Chairman and Deputy, and that, in the discussions which are about to take place, it will at least suggest to them the probability that my motives and conduct may have been very different from those exhibited or insinuated in the official documents before them. I am very anxious to have an opportunity of talking the matter over with you, and will go to Town, for the purpose, on Friday.....”

(4) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, Sutton Park, 31 January 1824*

“There is, I understand, among the official papers at the India House, a despatch from Metcalfe dated the 28th March, 1823. I have not seen it, but a friend of mine, who has, tells me that it alleges my brother to have been connected with Palmer’s house up to the time of his quitting India. My informant must, I think, be mistaken; but lest there should be such an allegation in the despatch I am anxious to repeat the assurance I gave you personally, that my brother stands in precisely the same circumstances as I do; and that, from the establishment of Palmer’s house, ten years ago, up to this day, he has not had any sort of interest or connection with it directly or indirectly.....”

(5) *N. B. Edmonstone to Henry Russell, London, 17 March 1824*

“My dear Russell.

You are not to suppose, because you have not heard from me on the subject of your concerns that I have been inattentive to them. I have placed some papers in the hands of several directors.....You are of course aware that the Hyderabad papers will form a conspicuous (I may say in the eyes of the public the principal) part of the Documents embraced by the late Resolution of the Court of Proprietors. Now that being the case, I do think it of importance that they should be accompanied by an explanatory and exculpatory statement on your part.....”

(6) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, Sutton Park, 19 March 1824*

“My dear Sir,

I thank you very much for the use you have made of my papers. What you propose is exactly what I was about to do; and the purpose, for which I required the papers, was to assist me in drawing up a statement to go forth at the same time with the documents about to be printed at the India house. In doing this, I should be most materially assisted if I could obtain access to the principal papers to which I shall have to reply. As they are about to be published, could

you, without impropriety, procure me a previous sight of them or do you think the Court would give them to me, if I were to address them officially, through the Secretary, stating the purpose for which I require them, and appealing to their justice not to allow the allegations against me to go forth to the public, without giving me the opportunity of answering them ?.....”

(7) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, Sutton Park, 23 March 1824*

.....“If the Court refuse to print my statement with the other papers, I will beg you to give me the earliest intimation of their refusal. I will, in that case, get it printed uniformly with them, and circulated as widely as I can.....”

(8) *N. B. Edmonstone to Henry Russell, London, 7 April 1824*

“My Dear Russell,

I send a note which I received last night from Money. Knowing the rigid adherence of the Court to forms I am not much surprised at their declining to place your letter among the documents about to be published. I spoke to Baillie two days ago about it and he engaged to advocate its publication but he expressed at the same time his belief that it would be in vain. I trust however the rejection of your request will not appear to you a matter of much moment under the considerations suggested by Money. I infer from the first paragraph of his letter that the Court will have no hesitation in receiving and publishing your vindication if sent in after the publication of the documents now in the press, and perhaps there is some force in his observation that as an insulated paper it will attract more attention than if it followed in the train of the rest.

Believe me ever

Yours very faithfully,

N. B. Edmonstone”

“Mrs E. and I were happy to learn by your last note that your little Boy was still going on well. Give our united remembrances to Mrs. Russell.”

(9) *N. B. Edmonstone to Henry Russell, London, 2 October 1824*

“My Dear Russell,

I think your very able letter to the Court should have a wider circulation. Every one whom I have heard speak of the ‘Hyderabad Business’ speaks of it in terms of unqualified reprobation and your being implicated in it has also been noticed, among others by Sir John

Kennaway to whom in consequence I have sent one of the two copies of your letter which you left for me. I presume copies are to be purchased at your Publishers. My answer to such observations has been and will be that there is another side of the question, referring at the same time to your letter.

A Director I am told has remarked upon the circumstance of your letter having come out almost simultaneously with the Papers and expressed his surprise how you could have obtained access (as from that circumstance it is presumable you must have done) to the documents which implicate you, before the Papers were ready for delivery. I mention this in case you should think it at all necessary to enable me to give any explanation. It is not impossible I think that this matter may be noticed in our Court.

You will consider this communication of course as confidential. I write in a hurry being much engaged at present.

Ever yours faithfully,

N. B. Edmonstone"

(10) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, Sutton Park, 3 October 1824*

"My dear Sir,

You gratify me very much by the terms in which you mention my letter to the Court. I have done everything in my power to give it a wide circulation. I sent copies to the different Proprietors, who have taken part in the late debates, as well as to the Directors; and I, some days ago, desired my publisher, in compliance with a suggestion from himself, to send copies to thirty or forty other Proprietors. A number were sent to Parbury and Allen, the publishers of the Asiatic Register, and one went to Mr. Buckingham, the Editor of the Oriental Herald. To Sir John Kennaway I myself sent a copy, through my brother in law, Mr. Porter, in Devonshire. I sent parcels of them to a variety of different friends, to be circulated by them; and, among others, to Lord Whitworth; and I am glad to find from him, that even in that class of society in which Indian subjects generally excite the least interest, the paper is making its way, and is in request. Yesterday only I received a letter from Lord Whitworth desiring to have some more copies. I inclose a note to my publisher, desiring him to send you as many as you may require; and you will essentially oblige me by giving them to anybody who takes an interest in the subject or who will be at the trouble of reading the paper... ..

It was of course my object to confine myself to my own defence, and to shewing, by one or two striking Instances, the unjust and violent spirit by which my opponents have been actuated. Since I have been able to consider the papers more at leisure, I find that the strength even of my own individual case, if I had had more time, has been largely increased and extended. The partners of the House, if they have judgment and prudence, have both a strong position to maintain, and a weak one to attack; and as to Chundoo Loll, it seems to me that he requires little more than a dispassionate consideration of the very charges against him, for his complete vindication. It appears by Sir C. Metcalfe's own avowal that he had hardly set his foot at Hyderabad before he took the revenue settlement of the Country out of the Minister's hands, which was, in fact, usurping the whole authority of the government. Can it be wondered at, that an act of such precipitate violence provoked disgust and resistance, and that the Minister, by all the Means in this power, opposed a scheme of measures, which were founded on the utter subversion of his own authority, and virtually destroyed the independence of his Government and Country ?

Believe me etc.

H. R."

(11) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, Sutton Park, 20 October 1824*

"My dear Sir,

The evident tendency of so much of the correspondence which has been printed is to refer the embarrassment of the Nizam's affairs, if not also the uneasiness of his mind, to the measures pursued by Sir C. Metcalfe's predecessors at Hyderabad, that it is due to me, as well as those who went before me, that all the causes which have contributed to the mischief should be exposed. Frequent allusion is made, in the printed papers, to the principle and effects of the late Treaty with the Nizam, but the real character of the measure is nowhere exhibited, and it is manifest that the Court has been kept in ignorance, both of what the Nizam's rights were, and of the manner in which they have been violated. If the real causes of alarm and dissatisfaction which have been given to him were known, no surprise could be expressed at the effects they have produced. I send you the part of the draft of my letter which relates to this point. I was deterred from printing it by considerations which will be obvious to you. I then thought of putting it into the shape of a separate letter to the Court; but further reflection has made me doubtful of the propriety of that course also. It must be a strong case that would justify a diplomatic agent in divulging the instructions under which he acted. Is it competent to me to address

such a letter to the secret committee, from whom of course no part of the proceedings of the Indian Government ought to be concealed ? Or could you put the draft, as it is, into the hands of the Chairman and Deputy ? As far as my vindication is concerned, my object would be attained if they were made acquainted with the real facts of the case, of which it is manifest that, at present, they are ignorant; and if, after knowing the facts, it should be their wish to have the communication made to them officially, I can of course make it in any shape that may be thought proper.

Believe me always

most sincerely Yours,

H. Russell".

[Enclosure in above]

"In reviewing the circumstances of the Nizam's Government at the time this loan was made, it must be borne in mind, that much of his debt had been incurred by the expenses of the war, and that much of it would have been discharged if he had received the share, to which he was entitled, in the advantages of peace.

In the instructions conveyed to me in Mr. Chief Secretary Adam's despatch dated the 26th September 1818, which however I did not receive until the end of March 1819, it was asserted, as the basis on which the partition of conquests was to be made, that 'the Nizam could set up no claim to anything like an equal participation; he was to be considered as an auxiliary only; and although the zeal and fidelity, with which his duties as an ally had been performed, were fully admitted, it was maintained that the contest had demanded the employment of the British resources, in a proportion so much beyond any comparison with those brought forward by the Nizam, that the two Powers could not be considered as standing on a similar footing, in regard to the issue'.

The Nizam's Minister, on the other hand, maintained that the Nizam was entitled to share equally with the Company. The grounds on which his right was asserted are stated in the following passage of a memorandum, transmitted by me in an unofficial letter to the Secretary at Calcutta, on the 15th May 1819.

"The second clause of the third separate and secret article of our Treaty of the 12th October 1800 with the Nizam, expressly declares, that "his highness shall be entitled to participate equally with the other contracting parties, in the division of any territory which may be acquired by the successful exertion of their united arms; provided his highness shall have faithfully fulfilled all the stipulations of the

preceding Treaty." In what respect did the Nizam fail in the fulfilment of any of the stipulations of the Treaty during the late war? He brought forward all the resources of his country, and placed them at our command. His troops were equal in numbers, and far superior in quality, to those which were contemplated when the Treaty was framed. It could not have been expected, at that time, that he would be capable of such exertions as those which he has actually made. His Government was then, in all respects, as much inferior to ours, and stood as much on the footing of a mere auxiliary, as it does now. If, therefore, he was then declared to be entitled to an equal participation of conquests, what change of circumstances has occurred to deprive him of that right now?

The Nizam's claim to the benefit of this stipulation is strengthened by a reference to the circumstances under which it was introduced into the Treaty. The article in which it occurs consisted, in the original draft, of that part only which now forms the first clause, and which provides, that if hostilities should take place, 'The contracting parties will proceed to adjust the rule of participation of all such advantages and acquisitions as may eventually result from the success of their united arms.' But the Nizam positively refused to conclude the Treaty, unless a Specific provision were made for the partition of eventual conquests; and Lord Wellesley then consented to add the second clause to the article, which establishes the Nizam's right to equal participation. Nothing can be stronger or more distinct than the expressions of which his Lordship makes use, when he authorises the insertion of this condition. He was fully aware that the Nizam's title to an equality of benefits could never be derived from an equality of exertions. His only objection lay against the introduction into a Treaty avowedly defensive in its principle, of a stipulation of which the fulfilment necessarily implied the occurrence of hostilities. His Lordship says 'It is certain, with whatever fidelity the Nizam might, in the event of a war, fulfil the stipulations of the second article of the Governor General's Treaty, his highness's actual share of expense and exertion in military operations could never be an exact proportion, but must be greatly inferior, to the expense and exertion of the Company; and that consequently his highness could in no case ever become positively entitled to share equally with the Company in a partition of conquests. But so rigid an application of that principle was never in the contemplation of the Governor General. His Lordship is aware that neither the resources nor the nature of the Nizam's Government admit of his highness's contributing equally with the Company to the successful prosecution of a common war, and consequently he could never hope for more than the best exertions

in the power of the Nizam to make. Such exertions, if honestly made, would entitle his highness, on every principle of justice, to an equal participation of conquests with the Company, to which he was not entitled on the same principles in the late war of Mysore; because, in the prosecution of that war, he was neither bound by Treaty to furnish, nor did actually furnish, the greatest practicable force in his power, as he would be obliged to do in case of a future war under the terms of the proposed Treaty.' We consented to insert his stipulation into the Treaty, avowedly as the price of the Nizam's agreeing to conclude it. We did it with our eyes open, with a full knowledge of the inferiority of the Nizam's power and resources, and with an express declaration, that his doing his best, little as that best might be, would of itself place him on a footing of equality with ourselves. The justice of this admission, or the expediency of the agreement which was founded upon it, it is now too late to consider. It might have been a question then, whether it was prudent in us to make such a stipulation, but it can no longer be a question now, whether it is obligatory upon us to fulfil it. The terms of the stipulation are clear, positive, and distinct; and it cannot now be set aside, without shewing that the Nizam has wilfully failed in the fulfilment of his part of the compact.

No question was made of the existence of this right at the close of the Marhattah war of 1803. Our Government then contended, not only that the Nizam had failed in the fulfilment of his obligations, but that the failure had been of such magnitude as to nullify the conditions of the Treaty. He was told, not that those conditions did not originally give him such a right, but that the conditions themselves had ceased to exist; and the share of conquests which was given to him, was given gratuitously, as a free gift, to which it was maintained he had no right whatever; and not as a reduced portion, calculated on the relative inferiority of his exertions."

To this memorandum I did not receive any answer from the Secretary; but four months afterwards I received an unofficial letter, dated the 4th September 1819, from Mr. Adam, who had then become a member of council in which he said; 'It would be premature to trouble you with any remarks on the merits of the question at issue; but we are still disposed here [to] think the Nizam will have ample justice done to his claims, by a settlement such as that proposed in the instructions.' In consequence of this intimation, I immediately proceeded to notify to the Nizam's Minister the terms which were to form the basis of the Treaty of partition; and the particulars of what passed between us on the subject were reported by me in two despatches to the Governor General dated the 5th and 22nd of October 1819.

By the subversion of the Paishwah's power, the Nizam was relieved from the payment of the *choute* or blackmail which had been exacted from him by the Marhattas. The territory conquered during the wars produced an annual revenue estimated at near eighty lacs of Rupees. Out of this, it was proposed to assign to the Nizam those small detached portions only, which were intermixed with his own possessions, and of which his Ministers assented that the annual produce did not exceed eight lacs of Rupees; and even in return for this small acquisition, he was required to cede to us a tract of his own original territory, producing a clear annual revenue of ten or twelve lacs.

Nothing could exceed the dejection and disappointment with which the Minister received the notification of these terms. He alleged that they constituted a project, rather for the dismemberment of his master's old dominions, than for the partition of recent conquests; and that if they were enforced, the Nizam would be a loser instead of a gainer by the war. But he said 'The Nizam was weak; and we were strong, and to whatever we dictated he must submit.'

By the Treaty, as it was finally concluded, and as it now appears among the papers printed by your Honorable Court, the districts assigned to the Nizam are the same as those proposed in the original scheme; only our valuation which placed the revenue of them at ten lacs and a half of rupees, has been substituted for the smaller sum which the Nizam's Ministers contended was the actual produce. The territory acquired by us from the Nizam is reduced from the amount originally proposed to a little more than five lacs a year. The reduction has been effected, first, by lowering the valuation of the districts taken from him on the right bank of the Seena, in about the same proportion in which we raised the valuation of those assigned to him; and secondly by remitting the additional cession which it was originally proposed to require from him, either in the same quarter of his dominions, or at the western extremity of the Doab. The principle of the Treaty however remains the same. Not only has the Nizam's right to an equal share of the conquests been absolutely rejected, but it appears by the correspondence now printed by your Honorable Court, that an additional demand has been made upon him, on account of arrears of the revenue of some of the districts affected by the Treaty; and that a still further cession of Territory to us has been suggested for the satisfaction of that demand.

It is manifest, therefore, not only that the embarrassments of the Nizam's Government were not occasioned by the causes to which they have been referred, but were occasioned by causes to which they have not been referred. Your Honorable Court cannot be insensible, either to the injury which his affairs have sustained from the operation

of this arrangement, or to the different condition in which his territorial and financial interests would have stood, if the rights derived by him from the Treaty of 1800 had been satisfied. Under the real state of facts exhibited in the papers printed by your Honorable Court, surely it is unnecessary to resort, with Sir C. Metcalfe to the opinion, that 'the disgust which the Nizam is supposed to entertain towards us has been roused and influenced by fictitious reports of evil designs on our part'; or that 'one of the chief instruments by which he has been ruled and overawed by the several Ministers who have governed under our protection during his reign, has been a notion industriously instilled and fostered by themselves, that their influence with our Government warped off designs against his Country, which we should otherwise have carried into execution.'

Nor can your Honorable Court be surprised that the Nizam should now be in the frame of mind described by Sir C. Metcalfe, in the same despatch, where he says that 'He lives in constant dread of encroachment, and would be much alarmed by any new demand for territorial cession. He is not sensible of the advantages which he derives from the late Treaty, and does not give us credit for any liberality in that arrangement. When it was concluded, he was anxious to ascertain that it comprised all our demands, and that nothing further was to be required of him; and having ascertained those points, he seemed to content himself with the solace that it was no worse.'

(12) *N. B. Edmonstone to Henry Russell, Tunbridge Wells,*

13 October 1825

"My Dear Russell,

Your letter of the 9th reached me here the night before last. I had not opened the last *Oriental Herald*, but brought it with me from town for the purpose of perusing its principal articles. Of course, in consequence of your letter I immediately perused the article respecting Hyderabad and certainly I never read such a Tissue of Nonsense and old women's tales or rather, as I believe them literally to be, Bazar Gup, in my life. Those who have any knowledge of India will of course perceive the fallacy of the reasoning which would attribute to the British Supremacy all the evils and vices of the administration of the Countries connected with us by Subsidiary Treaties, as if the Native unprotected States were ever free from them; and those who put forth or countenance the Calumny apparently do not perceive the obvious inference that the Interposition not merely of our Influence but of our power to remedy these evils becomes a matter of obligation, that is,

that we are under a moral obligation to do that which they are fond of representing as a crying Sin,—Interference in the internal administration of Native States in alliance with us, controul their Independence and force them to be just.

The object of the Writer and the Editor is, you observe not to villify or accuse you, by the System. Indeed (in page 13) the former pays you individually the highest Compliments. He ascribes to you qualities wholly incompatible with the assumption of your being chargeable with any one of the crimes or abuses that he describes. But independently of that circumstance I feel confident that your character and conduct cannot suffer in the slightest degree in the estimation of the public from the Trash which he has put forth and certainly it will be quite time enough to adopt the course which you suggest (and which I agree with you is by far the most efficient, especially with the powers which you have shewn yourself master of, if the exigency should arise) when it is seen that any such effect is produced. I shall be on the watch, and be careful to inform you if I hear of any observations of a nature to suggest the expediency of a public vindication. You may rely upon my caution with respect to your Father.

Believe me ever yours, most faithfully,

N. B. Edmonstone”

(13) *Henry Russell to N. B. Edmonstone, 6 January, 1840*

[Criticizes the advance into Afghanistan]

“.....I am afraid that I am very old fashioned in my estimate of our recent Indian Policy. From the first I have viewed it with alarm and that alarm is no degree abated by our military achievements. Our troops I never doubted would do as they always have done. There was no danger of discomfiture but there is very great danger with consequences of success. The mischief is still in prospect. Our eyes must have been shut when we got entangled in this web of remote and complicated relations. Of what possible value can these out of the way allies be ever made to us? As Talleyrand said saucily of the ladies, the difficulty is not to get hold of them but to get rid of them. The worst symptom in the constitution of our Indian power is its tendency to distension; it has already got far beyond its healthy size and if it goes on swelling in this way must burst in the end. It is as much as we can do to keep things quiet at home but as long as we can do that we have nothing to dread from abroad. The fear of danger from an attack over land by any European

power is wholly visionary. The length of the march, the difficulties of the intermediate country and the disorders of the Govts. on the line are insurmountable obstacles to such an attempt. Let a Russian Army leave the Caspian in what efficiency it may, it must be crippled before it reaches the Sutledge. By composing the distractions and organising the resources of the countries across our frontier we are sharpening an implement that is sure to be turned against us and every step by which we advance beyond that line takes the conflict so much nearer to our enemy's resources and so much farther from our own. We have been too much in a hurry. Our measures were taken precipitately while the danger was problematical and remote. If we had paused till it assumed some determinate shape we might better have framed them to suit the exigency. Even had the danger been certain and immediate I cannot think that the course which was taken was in any respect the wise one. We are essentially a maritime people and should never attempt by land that which we can do by sea. A fleet sent to the Baltic and another to the Black Sea would have checked any projects that the Russians might have conceived and the occupation of the Sutledge or the Indus whichever might have been found the better line in a military view would have served every purpose of local defence. We should then have remained within immediate reach of our resources and should have kept in our front that formidable tract of country which we have now left indiscreetly in our rear. In the one case it would have opposed a barrier against the approach of the enemy, in the other it cuts us off from our resources and puts a serious impediment in our way if we have to make a retrograde movement. Have we never contemplated the possibility of a reverse in Caubul? If things go wrong there are our troops to fall back with deserts and mountains in their way, with hordes of Cossacks and Afghans all round them and perhaps a Russian Army in pursuit? Or are we to strip our own Territory to support them in their remote position? In either event how are we to control our Indian allies, neighbours and Subjects? When Dr. Busby attended Charles the 2nd round Westminster School he kept his hat on as long as he was in sight of his boys; and if our boys ever see us with our hats off we shall find it no easy matter to keep them in subjection.....".

C. COLLIN DAVIES

ARCHIVES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

I wonder if any of my colleagues in other lands of the Indian Ocean has ever thought of the contribution his archives might have to make to the study of the history of the Indian Ocean as a whole. In other words I wonder if there is among archivists and historians living in this part of the world what I might call an Indian Ocean consciousness.

Few members of our profession probably know that scientists in Asia, Africa and Australia have already formed an association known as Pan Indian Ocean Science Association with the following objects :

(1) to discuss and promote concerted action in regard to scientific problems especially affecting the well-being of the peoples and the progress of the countries around the Indian Ocean and to make recommendations to the countries concerned when necessary;

(2) to strengthen the bonds of friendship among all the peoples around the Indian Ocean by promoting a feeling of brotherhood among scientists and the maintenance of harmonious relations between them.

That association was formed in January 1951 at Bangalore, India, when thirty-six delegates representing nine countries met for the first Pan Indian Ocean Science Congress. The suggestion for such congresses was first made in Australia in 1947 and approved in 1949 by the Australian National Research Council. Thanks to the interest shown by Mr. Nehru, the Government of India agreed to sponsor the first congress and invitations were issued in 1950 for the Bangalore meeting. The second congress was held in Perth, Western Australia, in August 1954 and the third congress is to be held in Tananarive, Madagascar, in November 1957¹.

Why should archivists and historians be less Indian Ocean-minded than scientists ? While other oceans, the Atlantic, the Pacific and even the Polar Oceans, not to mention the Mediterranean, have incited considerable study, there seems to prevail in some quarters an entirely wrong attitude regarding the place of the Indian Ocean in historical study. This is probably due to the scarcity of general works on the Indian Ocean. I know myself of only two that are worth recording : Allan Villiers : *The Indian Ocean*, London, Museum Press, 1952, and Jacques Auber : *Histoire de l'Océan Indien*, Editions les Trois Iles, Tananarive, 1954. This is not much compared with the numerous

1. See the Proceedings of the *Pan Indian Ocean Science Congress*. The *P.I.O.S.A.* is also responsible for the publication of a valuable essay entitled *Preliminary review of the limits of the Indian Ocean*.

books devoted to the Pacific area, some of them strangely biased. A good instance is Freeman's *Geography of the Pacific* (London, Chapman & Hall, 1951) which opens with this surprising statement: "The Mediterranean is the ocean of the past, the Atlantic the ocean of the present and the Pacific the ocean of the future". The Indian Ocean, where so much history was made right from the time of the early Sumerians, is not even mentioned. Why indeed?

Another unfortunate tendency should be noted here in this connection, namely the tendency to divide the Indian Ocean area into artificial and ill-defined regions, *e.g.* Middle East, South Asia, South-East Asia, Africa south of the Sahara, etc. Such groupings may be convenient for the politician and the strategist but the reasons adduced in justification of this parcelling out of a region where the chief unifying factor is the Indian Ocean itself are, to my mind, very much open to criticism from the historical standpoint.

There is no denying, of course, that certain parts of the Indian Ocean area have a greater degree of social and political unity than others, but does that necessarily preclude the possibility of treating all the lands in and around this Ocean as a unit? Even from a strategic point of view would it not seem that in a broader sense the security of regions like the Middle East and South-East Asia must ultimately rest on their identity with an Indian Ocean community?

Fundamentally for the historian at any rate the Indian Ocean area consists of four, and only four, elements: (1) the ocean itself, (2) an African sea-board, (3) an Asian sea-board and (4) a number of islands, large and small, some, indeed, equivalent to semi-continents, like Madagascar and Australia; and my contention is that no serious study of any one of these elements can be undertaken without reference to the three others. I do not think, for instance, that this Ocean can be usefully divided for purposes of historical study as Auber seems to suggest into two broad areas called respectively "world of Cancer" and "world of Capricorn", since such a division is obviously based on the antithesis Orient-Occident, which antithesis did not, in fact, become really marked until after 1815 and even possibly later. I do not see, either, that there is sufficient justification for dividing into separate fields of study certain regions of the Indian Ocean just because of their political importance. As Professor Pollard rightly said: "We must use our history to enlighten our politics, but we must not let our politics contaminate our history".

2 The arguments in support of this view are very well set forth in W. Kirk, *Indian Ocean Community* (*The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (1951), pp. 161-177) which I strongly commend to the attention of all those interested in this question.

An Indian Ocean community is not just a pious wish. Recent archaeological research shows that there was continuous intercourse between the various lands of the Indian Ocean from very remote times and there is now good reason for believing that such intercourse must have been fairly extensive in the pre-Gama age, although it reached a peak only after Gama had opened the Cape route to the Indies. Interpenetration was, in fact, the chief characteristic of the relations between the lands around the Indian Ocean long before the coming of the Portuguese, and this cannot be too strongly emphasized. This point is very well made out in two recent works, the first, by a Frenchman, dealing with the types of ships used in the Indian Ocean in the pre-Gama age (Jean Poujade : *La route des Indes et ses marins*, Payot, Paris, 1946) and the second, by a Dutchman, on early Asian trade (J. C. Van Leur: *Indonesian trade and society; Essays in Asian Social and Economic History*, W. van Hoeve Ltd., The Hague, 1955).

The first Europeans to enter this Ocean by the Cape route were all struck by what Van Leur rightly terms "the internationality of Asian trade", a characteristic which retained its full significance as long as the political independence of oriental states remained uninfected upon by European influence, *i.e.*, until late in the 18th century. Gama's discovery itself, important as it was, did not *immediately* influence maritime intercourse in the Indian Ocean which, for a long time after the Portuguese incursion, continued to follow the same pattern it had followed for centuries before 1498. This is what Van Leur has to say on this point:

"After journeying through the inhospitable seas of southern Africa the Portuguese ships had come into regions where there was a complex of shipping, trade and authority as highly developed as the European: forms of political capitalism at least as large in dimensions as those of southern Europe, and probably larger; shipping in bottoms many of them carrying more than those used in European merchant shipping; a trade in every conceivable valuable high-quality product carried on by a great multitude of traders; merchant gentlemen and harbour princes wielding as great financial power as did the merchants and princes of Europe. By conquering the chief strategic points on the Asian sea routes, the Portuguese succeeded in establishing a colonial domain in that world, a weak empire which nevertheless was able to maintain itself with great vitality for a century. The Portuguese colonial regime, built by and upon war, coercion and violence, did not at any point signify a stage of 'higher development' economically for Asian trade. The traditional commercial structure continued to

exist, however much damaged by wars breaking out between Moslems and Christians.””.

For the archivist, however, the importance of Gama's discovery can hardly be overestimated, for it gave rise to what may be called the first proper archives of the Indian Ocean. Before Gama our sources for the historical study of this Ocean are limited to literature and art, including sculpture and painting, besides archaeology in its three-fold branches, epigraphic, monumental and numismatic, but there are few archival sources to speak of.

One important respect in which the European trader differed from his Oriental colleagues was that he was pre-eminently a *recorder*, and this applies to all European traders, whether they be Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, French or British. With the formation of trading companies at an early date record-keeping became fully organized. Any one who has seen the sets of consultations and diaries of the East India Company preserved in the former India Office (now Commonwealth Relations Office) in London, and in the Bombay and Madras repositories, in India, cannot but have been struck by the care taken by the employees of the Company to commit to writing even their minor transactions. The gradual replacement of trading companies by the State and the extension of state control over European settlements in Asia and Africa gave birth to more and more records in which we can trace the development of European activity in the East through its manifold stages. In passing it must be observed, however, that the average colonial administrator showed sometimes much less concern for records than the agents of trading companies, and that much damage befell archives in many dependent territories through the negligence of the said colonial administrator.

Missionaries, too, kept records, sometimes very detailed, of their activities and these constitute a class by themselves. The headquarters of all missionary societies are replete with documents of that kind.

Yet another type of records that came into being as a result of the coming of the Europeans was the newspaper. In 1744 the first newspaper to be issued in any land of the Indian Ocean came out of a Dutch printing press in Batavia. No archivist need be told how valuable newspapers are as a source of information, for the study of ship movements and trade relations especially.

I do not propose to list here all the various types of archives to which European beginnings in the Indian Ocean gave birth. A final reference must be made, however, to one particular type of such

archives : the *portolani* or nautical charts and *roteiros* or pilot-guides. Although oriental navigators travelled very far out into the Indian Ocean in the pre-Gaman age, cartographic records for that early period are rather few and far between, and it can be said that the cartography of this Ocean really began to take shape in the 15th century only. The first fairly accurate chart of this Ocean does not date further back than 1509. Pilot-guides are more ancient, the earliest one being the *Periplus maris Erythraei* due to an anonymous Greek navigator who lived at Alexandria in the first century A.D. To the Arabs also we owe some good pilot-guides, the most famous of which is probably Sulayman's *Silsilat-al-Tawarikh* dating from the 8th century. The Portuguese *roteiros*, however, constituted a definite improvement of these early pilot-guides and laid the foundations of scientific navigation in the Indian Ocean.

Where are all these archives of the Indian Ocean now to be found ? In Europe the chief repositories are the *Torre do Tombo* in Lisbon, the *Algemeen Rijksarchief* in The Hague, the *Rigsarkivet* in Copenhagen, the *Archives Nationales*, *Archives de la Marine*, *Archives de la France d'Outre-Mer* and *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris and finally the Commonwealth Relations Office, the British Museum and the Public Record Office in London. These repositories, however, seem to have paid so far more attention to the material relative to the Atlantic Ocean which they also house than to their Indian Ocean material. This is only natural considering that the Atlantic is so close to them and that it looms so large in European history.

On the other side of the Atlantic the archives centres in both North and South America have similarly paid special attention to the records concerning European expansion westwards. The same applies to the repositories in the Atlantic islands. During a recent visit to the Grand Canary I was absolutely fascinated by the magnificent organization of the repository of Las Palmas known as the *Casa de Colon* whose main object is to preserve and exploit material relative to Columbus. As far as I am aware, there is no archives set-up in any country of the Indian Ocean that has done for the promotion of the study of this Ocean anything like what the *Casa de Colon* has done for the study of Atlantic history⁴.

I have seen many, if not most, of the archives centres in South and East Africa, Madagascar, the Mascarenes, Southern Arabia, India and Ceylon and I must say that some of them, in India and South

4. The *Casa de Colon* has published several important contributions to the study of Atlantic history including an *Anuario de Estudios Atlanticos* issued at Madrid since 1955.

Africa especially, reflect the greatest credit on the archivists who built them up. I noted, too, that all my colleagues in those countries were keenly aware of the part their archives had to play towards the formation of a national consciousness; on the other hand, they did not seem to have given much thought to the idea of building up what I call the archives of the Indian Ocean.

I also noted in those countries the absence of museums or other institutions dedicated to their maritime history. Cape Town has a magnificent aquarium, but its museum seemed rather destitute of any exhibits of maritime interest. In Mombasa, Aden and Bombay too, I looked in vain for relics of the maritime history of those ports which played such an outstanding part in the trade of Indian Ocean. In Mombasa I was told about a project for turning Fort Jesus, the oldest Portuguese fort on the East African coast, into a maritime museum, but nothing has been done yet and Fort Jesus is still used, *horresco referens*, as a prison. Aden had a small archaeological museum at Taweela and when I was there in 1952 I heard of a project for building an aquarium for the benefit of the 200,000 tourists who call at Steamer Point every year, but the idea of having a maritime museum in a place famous for its maritime associations never seemed to have occurred to the Aden authorities. In Bombay I saw yet another magnificent aquarium, the Taraporewala Museum, on the Marine Drive, but of maritime museums I saw none.

To return now to archives repositories in this part of the world, I am fully aware that archives organization is a comparatively new development in Indian Ocean countries, having begun not much earlier than 1900. I am aware, too, that much work still lies ahead for all of us.

Preservation is the main object we now have to attend to, largely as a result of the attitude, which has been noted above, of the average colonial administrator towards archives, and some may say that we have to put our house in order before we can think in terms of exploitation of the material in our custody towards promoting the study of the history of the Indian Ocean. This objection is, no doubt, valid; still, I do think, from what I have seen, that archives organization in this part of the world has reached a stage when we can all begin to look beyond national frontiers and think seriously of co-operation and pooling our resources in the interest of common studies.

With regard to co-operation a start has already been made with the setting up of an International Council of Archives under whose

auspices three world Congresses on Archives were held recently: the first in Paris in 1950, the second at The Hague in 1953 and the third in Florence in 1956.

World congresses are, of course, good, but my own experience of such gatherings is that they have their drawbacks and disadvantages. To begin with, while it is easy for European archivists to attend congresses held in Europe this is not so easy for archivists living in Indian Ocean countries. In fact, very few of these countries were represented at the recent congresses, which I myself was privileged to attend, not, I must say, through any largesse of the Mauritius Government, but because they happened to coincide with my periods of overseas leave. There is another disadvantage. Archivists from this part of the world are likely to be swamped in a world congress by their far more numerous European colleagues. When I say swamped I do not want to say anything nasty about our European brother-archivists. I am, on the contrary, in a great debt of gratitude towards many of them. What I mean is simply that their interests differ from ours, that they think more of the Middle Ages than we do and that they do not understand most of our problems.

Even in the field of technique differences occur. There is, I believe, an archivology of the tropics or tropical archivology distinct from an archivology of temperate zones. By tropical archivology I mean the body of knowledge, information and technique relative to the preservation in the best conditions of archives material in hot and humid countries. This is a topic to which several important contributions have been made in this periodical, and it is to be hoped that some day it may receive fuller treatment in the form of a proper handbook or manual of tropical archivology, which every archivist working in the tropical zone would, no doubt, welcome.

It would thus appear that, valuable as world Congresses on Archives are, they do not preclude the possibility of regional meetings. Such regional gatherings have, in fact, already taken place. The fourth issue of *Archivum*,⁵ the international review of archives, published by the International Archives Council, contains accounts of a Spanish-American and Philippine Congress of Archives held at Madrid in 1952 and of a meeting of Scandinavian archivists held at Abo, in Finland, in August 1954, in connection with a congress of Scandinavian historians. From these accounts it will be seen that much good work was done at those two regional meetings. Emboldened by such precedents, I therefore ventured, during the Florence Congress on

5. See *Archivum*, IV (1954), pp. 204-9.

Archives in September 1956 to make a formal proposal to the International Archives Council for a regional meeting of archivists and historians of the Indian Ocean with a view to ensuring closer co-operation between such archivists and historians and setting up some sort of permanent organization for the study of the history of the Indian Ocean. That proposal was seconded by Mme Denise Ravage, then UNESCO representative on the International Council and it was readily agreed to in principle by the Council.

Since then two other projects also bearing on the archives of the Indian Ocean have come to my notice. The first, relates to a regional conference of historians of South-East Asia to be held in 1959 with the following objects:

- (1) to study past trends and attitudes of Asian historians;
- (2) to make plans for more regular contacts and exchange of lecturers, students and ideas;
- (3) to discuss problems concerning the establishment of archives and the preservation of documentary material;
- (4) to consider whether a research centre should be established in South-East Asia;
- (5) to consider whether there is scope for a locally published Journal of Historical Studies devoted to South-East Asia.

The second, which is sponsored by the C.C.T.A., aims at a pooling of archival resources in the area known as Africa south of the Sahara, including Madagascar and the Mascarenes, with a view to setting up of a Central Bureau of Archival Co-operation in the Central African Archives at Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia.

I have no first-hand knowledge of South-East Asia, since my travels never took me further east than the Coromandel Coast; and though familiar with the more recent historical literature concerning the said region, I cannot say that I am widely read on its history. On the question as to whether there is a real need for a research centre in South-East Asia I cannot therefore say anything definite. From what I know, however, I should have thought that such a research centre already existed. What about the *Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient* or French School of Far Eastern Studies set up in Indo-China since 1900, an institution which, in the opinion of the eminent orientalist, Barthold,⁶ has no counterpart in any other oriental country and whose contribution to the history of the East was—and, I believe, still is—considerable.

6. V. V. Barthold : *La découverte de l'Asie* (Trans. from the Russian by B. Nikitine), Payot, Paris, 1947, p. 162.

I should have thought, too, that learned periodicals like *T'oung Pao* and the *Far Eastern Quarterly*, the latter especially, which covers South-East Asia very fully, could hardly be improved upon by a locally published journal of historical studies devoted to the area under reference.

Anyway, assuming that there is a need for a new institution for the specific study of the history of South-East Asia as distinct from that of the Indian Ocean as a whole, I am not convinced at all, speaking primarily as an archivist, that the archives of that region can be organized on a limited South-East Asian basis better than they can be on a broader Indian Ocean basis.

The second project concerns a region with which I am familiar and where I have travelled extensively. I am aware of the excellent work done at the Central African Archives in Salisbury, but here again none of the arguments put forth in support of a Central Bureau for the Archives of Africa south of the Sahara has convinced me that archives in this region cannot be organized on an Indian Ocean basis. The archives of South and East Africa definitely form part of what I call archives of the Indian Ocean, since all countries in those parts of Africa were settled from this Ocean.

Africa, unlike Asia, lived for centuries retired within itself, it never listened to, never heard even, the call of the sea, and each successive wave of settlers, Arabs, Indians, Chinese, Europeans who made history in the "dark continent" came to it from the Indian Ocean, so that the history of the whole eastern coast of Africa from Cape Town to Suez is intimately linked up with oceanic history from the earliest times. Even the movement that led to the formation of what is now known as Central Africa had its origin on the shores of the Indian Ocean. The head of the Central African Archives is himself very much aware of this, since he recently initiated a project for publishing, in collaboration with the *Arquivo Historico de Mocambique*, material from the *Torre do Tombo* and other Portuguese archives destined to supplement Theal's *Records of South-Eastern Africa*, a project, I may add, which will undoubtedly earn him the gratitude of all those interested in the history of the Indian Ocean.⁷

With his present project I must, however, disagree since I have strong doubts as to the scope and usefulness of a scheme tending to make the Central African Archives the centre of an archives organization extending to Madagascar and the Mascarenes Islands, which, although sometimes wrongly called African Islands, do not, in any way, form

7. On this project see the Central African Archives Report for 1949-54 entitled *Archives in a new era*, pp. 46-8.

part of Africa'. Why not look at this matter from an oceanic angle and, following the example of the scientists, work for the recognition of an Indian Ocean community? If scientists have succeeded in setting afoot an organization dedicated to the study of the Indian Ocean as a whole, why should archivists and historians be less willing to work on the same lines? I am putting the question to all my colleagues in this part of the world.

At the beginning of this article I pointed out that the wrong attitude regarding the place of the Indian Ocean in historical study was probably due to the scarcity of general works on this Ocean. But this scarcity is itself due to lack of information on the sources of Indian Ocean history. At the moment the difficulties facing the student setting out to investigate fairly fully even a small corner of this field are simply tremendous, since there is as yet no general guide to the archives of the Indian Ocean nor a handbook of information on the present state of historical studies in this area nor even a tentative bibliography of the Indian Ocean in history. One has only to go through a book like Furber's remarkable *John Company at Work*⁹—one of the few books relating to Indian Ocean history based on an extensive use of primary sources—to realise the difficulties that faced the author from the start in his attempt to get a clear and complete view of the activities of the East India Company in the 18th century. Is it not for us, archivists of the Indian Ocean, to facilitate the production of more works like Furber's, irrespective of any moral judgements any one of us may wish to pass upon the story of European expansion in this Ocean?¹⁰

Is it not for us, too, to lay the foundations of what I have called tropical archivology and so make a distinct contribution to the progress of archive technique?

8. On this point see especially J. Weulersse (*L'Afrique Noire*, Payot, Paris, 1956, pp. 447-56) whose conclusions may be quoted here: "One important remark has to be made concerning Madagascar and the neighbouring island-formations; it is the striking originality of these territories and their independence vis-a-vis the great neighbouring continent. Independence is even too weak; opposition would be a better word".

9. Holden Furber: *John Company at Work*, Harvard University Press, 2nd edit., 1952. Furber's work was made possible by a John Simon Guggenheim Research Fellowship for the year 1937-38.

10. In this connection I would beg to quote Furber's own remarks: "No one should approach a study of this kind with any sense of bias or prejudice. The eighteenth century is sufficiently remote from our own day to enable us all whether Europeans or Indians, to view its history in an objective and impartial spirit and to refrain from misusing the history of that age for propaganda purposes in the political and economic controversies of to-day".

And even if a gathering of archivists from all Indian Ocean countries had no other purpose but “to strengthen the bonds of friendship among all the peoples around the Indian Ocean”—to use the words of the manifesto issued some years ago by the Pan Indian Ocean Science Association—would not that be, in itself, something worth striving for ?

AUGUSTE TOUSSAINT

A NOTE ON THE MELVILLE MANUSCRIPTS IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

THE National Library of Scotland has in its possession a large collection of Melville Manuscripts which have been acquired by it in several lots. Among them are a large number of papers pertaining to modern Indian history, most of them unpublished so far.

The first Viscount Melville was Henry Dundas a Scots lawyer whose immediate relations and forefathers were distinguished members of the legal profession in Edinburgh. The Dundases of Arniston were a very tight family group and were eminent among the *noblesse de robe* who held a high position among the official society of Scotland at the end of the eighteenth century. Dundas himself devoted his position as Lord Advocate of Scotland and his family connections in Scotland to building up what was called in those days an "electoral influence" in that still electorally backward country; and he seems to have used this to create a position for himself in national politics at Westminster. Dundas came into prominence in support of the much-maligned North Ministry at the time of the War of American Independence, but was also one of the leaders of the group within the government which advocated moderate reforms for the administration of the East India Company's constitution both in England and in India. He was the Chairman of the Committee selected in the spring of 1781 to meet as a Secret Committee to inquire into the scandals created by the recent war in the Carnatic, and by the misgovernment of Sir Thomas Rumbold in Madras, and also into the assorted charges of misdemeanours by the Company's servants. This was a period of discussion about the changes necessary in the constitution of the East India Company, and of investigation into various acts of misgovernment in which some of the Company's servants were alleged to be participating. These criticisms were directed at many types of people ranging from Warren Hastings, the Governor-General, to various speculators, who were using the debts of the Nawab of the Carnatic (Walajah Muhammad Ali) to make a dividend out of the mortgaged revenues of the lands of the Carnatic. It was then the duty of the officials of the Treasury Board, controlled by the First Lord of the Treasury himself, to deal with the affairs of the East India Company in so far as they concerned the government, and these officials could hardly cope with the increased volume of correspondence with the Company that was speedily becoming necessary. They also found it difficult to "manage" the Company's administration due to various reasons. Though Treasury officials like John Robinson or Charles Jenkinson, father of the later Prime Minister,

Lord Liverpool, were insistent like Dundas about the need for moderate reform Lord North himself was powerless to make a decision. A Select Committee had in fact been set up by Parliament to examine petitions against the Supreme Court in Bengal, but such was the weight of Opposition feeling against the Company that through the influence of a leading member, Edmund Burke, it undertook instead a survey of the administration, security and prosperity of the territories of the old Mughal *Subah* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, much of which had come under the sovereignty of Parliament. "There were few members of Parliament who really made an attempt to understand India thoroughly. On the one side, Burke and Sheridan stand out, on the other Dundas" The "two Committees soon began to exercise a powerful influence on Indian affairs". Since Burke and Sheridan were in opposition for most of this period, except for a brief spell during the Fox-North Ministry, when Dundas seems to have been equally important³, Dundas soon became the recognised expert on the affairs of the British administration in India⁴.

It is in these circumstances, Holden Furber notes, that Dundas "began to keep a file of the letters he received from the East. Those that survive for the year 1782 are not very numerous, but they indicate that his compatriots in India looked upon him as a champion of the Crown against the Company and viewed the prospect of his acceptance of a new post as Secretary of State for India with unmixed joy"⁵. Dundas himself, seems to have felt, at this stage, that the seat at the Treasury Board which North offered him was no solution for the problems of Indian government; but the panacea he seems to have suggested was the creation of a third Secretary of State to direct the Government supervision of the Company's policies and this supervision would of course be carried out by himself, a solution curiously similar to that proposed for the administration of the British colonies in a previous period of crisis, i.e. 1766, when a Secretary of State had been created for the control of colonial affairs. But Dundas was too late for the sort of personal control by a Cabinet Minister that he proposed and

1. Furber, H., *Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville, 1742-1811*, (London, 1931), p. 11.

2. Sutherland, L., *East India Company in Eighteenth Century Politics* (London, 1952), p. 363.

3. Throughout the term of its office, Dundas was in touch with Robinson and the Treasury officials who had the ear of King George the III and it was on the initiative of the latter that the ministry fell.

4. For a brief study of Dundas' career see Furber, *op. cit.* Sutherland, *ibid.* is also interesting for his influence on Indian affairs.

5. Furber, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

much too early for the acceptance of his theory in legal form by Parliament and governing circles. In 1782, the Secretary of State for Home Affairs was given charge of all colonial correspondence, and temporarily, all the correspondence of the Company that the Treasury had been harassed with. In 1782, Parliament and Crown finally found themselves after much expenditure of East India Company and Tory funds in agreement on the Indian question⁶ and under the terms of the consequent India Act, which goes under the name of Pitt, but was actually framed by John Robinson, Thomas Atkinson and Dundas, a separate Board of Control was set up to supervise the Government's duties of controlling the affairs of the Company. Dundas was the expert on this till 1793, when he became the official President⁷. Dundas was President from 1793 to 1801, and was also Secretary of State for War, and therefore for Colonies, under the terms of an administrative arrangement in 1794, till 1801. The government of India by the British was ineradicably mixed up with motives and patterns common to the government of the rest of the British Empire; and the period of Henry Dundas at the head of Imperial affairs was one when the control of the British Empire from Bencoolen and India through Ceylon and Mauritius to the Cape of Good Hope and the West Indies was in the same hands, due more to reasons of expediency than to constitutional enactment⁸.

It was in these circumstances that the Melville collection was built up. Dundas' son, Robert Saunders Dundas, 2nd Viscount Melville, was also President of the Board of Control for Indian Affairs, for two separate periods in the first and third decades of the nineteenth century. His letters on various affairs will be found tabulated subject-wise at the end of his father's letters which are also tabulated by the Library authorities. An exception, however, is the case of enclosures from India, which according to the filing practice of the Board of Control⁹

6. Laprade, W. T., ed. *Parliamentary Papers of John Robinson* (London, 1922).

7. He became President in virtue of his position as one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State. The previous Chairmen had been Lord Sydney, better known as Thomas Townshend, Secy. of State (Home) in 1782, and William Wyndham Grenville, better known as Lord Grenville, Prime Minister in 1806, who was also connected in this period with colonial legislation in Canada.

8. The interlinking of administrative practice can be studied best in Coupland, Sir R., *The American Revolution and the British Empire* (London, 1930) and in Egerton, H.E., (ed. by Newton, A. P.) *A Short History of British Colonial Policy* (London, 1932).

9. cf. a memo., drawn up by C. Boughton Rouse, the first secretary of the Board of Control, in which he drafted the new procedure adopted by the Board for filing its documents. (India Office Library, London, Home Miscellaneous Series, Vol. 341, p. 22).

were separated from covering letters, and reference was made easy by a note of the relevant enclosure on the covering letter. It seems striking, however, that the Dundases, father and son were in the habit of keeping their official correspondence in their private archive collections—a practice which does not seem to have been followed by, let us say, the Grenville family which had a similar connection with the Board of Control at roughly the same time¹⁰. Matters of State are discussed in the Dropmore Papers, generally through the medium of official and demi-official letters between ministers and ambassadors; but there is hardly the same copious reference to official figures and statistics that we have for instance in Ms. 1064 of the Melville Mss. respecting cotton tariff policy relating to Bengal and Lancashire in the '80s. The period of the French Wars was a period of multiplication of public duties for a very few British statesmen who held all the strings of power, and it was all that the Grenvilles could do to keep copies of even their demi-official correspondence. The reason for the preservation of the Dundas Papers seems to be, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the lack of space in the Chambers in Whitehall where the Board of Control had to meet for the first few years. Dundas, the expert, probably removed the Indian correspondence he had to deal with to his own house. In 1805, a house was built for the Board, one of its many residences¹¹, but by that time Dundas' impeachment was in full train. It seems probable that he wanted to keep the public papers on his tenure of office by his side to confound accusers. The Melville Papers which remained safely in the possession of the family for many decades were widely dispersed in the twenties of this century. There were four sales of these manuscripts from 1924 to 1929 and these in consequence have been widely scattered in many countries. The National Library of Scotland had acquired a considerable part of the original Melville collection, particularly those relating to the Scottish affairs¹².

The Melville Papers have been tabulated and catalogued by Mr. H. W. Meikle who was Librarian of the National Library of Scotland.

10. We have referred to Lord Grenville's incumbency of the Board. His brother, Thomas Grenville, the donor of the Grenville bequest to the British Museum, was President of the Board for a short while in 1806 in his elder brother's Ministry of All the Talents. A nephew, Charles Watkins William Wynn was President in the 1820s. The Dropmore Papers, or to put it more accurately the papers of J.B. Fortescue published by the Historical Manuscript Commission house the correspondence of the Grenvilles.

11. See Foster, Sir W., *John Company* (London, 1926), chapter on the India Board for a map of Whitehall at this period.

12. The National Archives of India has obtained microfilm copies of most of the manuscripts pertaining to India and these are available for research.

Vol. I of the *Catalogue of Manuscripts acquired since 1925* has extensive entries of papers relating to Dundas' control of Indian affairs and the policies which he formulated. This was published in 1938, and includes only the manuscripts upto Ms. 1074. The rest are tabulated in Vols. II and III which are still in typescript and can only be consulted in the Reading Room of the Library. Vol. IV is also in preparation and is reported to catalogue a few papers of Henry Dundas, though it is not known whether they relate to India. Volume I has been published in a way which will make it very easy for research workers on Indian history to look up references on Dundas; each volume has been given a simple manuscript number; e.g., Man. 1, Man. 1065, Man. 3386, etc. arranged in serial fashion which is continued in the volumes not yet published. A very brief summary of the documents on Indian history is appended below¹³.

Mss. 1-67 contain letters received by the two Melvilles and also copies of replies or drafts of replies; these have been used in Furber's, *Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville*, already quoted.

Ms. 12, ff. 187 has papers on the administration of justice in India.

Ms. 16, f. 5 contains ten letters of Edmund Burke, mainly on Indian affairs and the trial of Warren Hastings, 1783-91, with the copy of a reply from Dundas, 1787. This material might be of interest in studying the cross-sections of English opinion about the nature of constitutional change in the Company's government in India, considering the fact that Burke and Dundas were the leaders of opposite groups of opinion on Indian affairs, and there were hardly any other groups outside Parliament and the Company which had access to their sources of information. The letters have been studied by Dr. Furber for his study of Dundas' involvement in the impeachment of Warren Hastings; and he has also shown his acquaintance with the letters in his recent article on Edmund Burke and India¹⁴. Dr. Furber writes "In all these writings of the 1780s, speeches as well as letters, it seems to me that constructive thought on India (from Burke) is most difficult to find..... Too often, Burke thought no further than the transfer of British authority in India to hands which to him were virtuous". This criticism of Burke is in keeping with current trends in the Western writing of British history which is interested in uncovering the fallibility of the motives of radical opponents of British imperialism, and this is probably a useful thing to do in view of the myths which accrete on history; but the

13. This summary has been extracted from the *Catalogue of the National Library*, and I claim no originality for the form of the tabulation, though the comments are my own.

14. *Bengal Past and Present*, 1957, Jubilee Number, Vol. lxvii.

more significant value of these papers seems to lie in the possible re-interpretation of motives of legislation and legislators in this period in the light of the circumstances of society.

Mss. 20-57 are the Secretary's Minute Books which contain summaries of letters addressed to Henry Dundas with his autograph instructions as to replies, 1792-95, 1797-1801 and 1801-05.

Ms. 59 entitled "Miscellaneous Book, Vol. I" is a Letter Book of the 2nd Viscount from 1807-10 containing copies of letters to "Indian officials and statesmen, on civil and military matters".

There is a set of volumes from Ms. 1060 to 1074, which deal almost exclusively with matters of Indian import. These seem, however, to have been serially numbered as they were acquired, and I propose to mention them in what seems to me a logical order.

Ms. 1060 is divided into three general sections. The first one is tabulated as administration, defence, policy and general, 1778-1815, and extends from f.1 to f.120. It contains useful material on the nature of the functions of the Board of Control in foreign policy and inter-departmental co-ordination (ff.30, 35 and 37). The second section is supposed to be the one which deals with the affairs of the Army, 1785-1811 and in 1828. As early as 1785, we have a letter from a Colonel Fullarton from Pondicherry to the President and Council of Fort St. George, which may roughly be analysed under the following heads;

(a) The loyalty of the troops of whatever nationality was liable to be sapped by delay in the disbursement of their pay. (b) There had been a depreciation of currency, which could affect the first presumption by lowering the purchasing power of what they were paid. (c) Retrenchment on the other hand was not very favourably viewed among the troops. (d) The note ends on the warning note of: Look to the loyalty of your Sepoys. (Ms. 1060, ff. 129-34.)

This letter might perhaps be compared with the information furnished to the Home Government on the eve of the Vellore Mutiny of Sepoys of the Madras Army in 1806, though the responsibility for this Mutiny and for the great Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 was fastened by public opinion in Great Britain on a variety of causes like discontent of the princely classes (e.g. the Mysore family in 1806), the influence of Evangelicalism or modernisation or the inefficiency of army leaders. All these causes were contributory factors, but the cause for the precipitation of a revolutionary situation may be found in a correlated study of economic conditions and the material condition of the soldiery. On ff. 135-36, there are copies of letters from Fullarton and other

officers of the Southern army on the state of the army's finances in 1791. Ms. 2257 in the Melville Collection is catalogued as containing letters chiefly to the 1st Viscount from Colonel William Fullarton, on Indian regimental and personal matters.

The third section of Ms. 1060 is composed of the letters of George Smith, who was a member of the Bengal Council from 1785-91, containing information or proposals regarding finance, trade, crops, China and general matters. The main interest in this set lies in the fact that the letters were addressed to Henry Dundas or oftener still, his private clerk at the India Board, William Cabell, and there seems to have been a material degree of secrecy maintained in the correspondence. Dundas seems to have been tapping assorted sources of information in the course of his Indian duties¹⁶. Smith was in addition to his own duties, a merchant who tried to carry on trade with various Asian ports ranging from Tellicherry and Anjengo in Konkan and Malabar, to Canton and Macao. The nature of his attitude to the Company's monopoly regarding the Indian trade will be seen from this extract from one of his letters:

"Should the scheme I have proposed to your Deliberation for the payment of the Company's Debt be adopted, I will engage to provide the Investment of the Sum with goods of this country for a Commissionprovided always that I am supported by Government in the provision of these goods, against the intrigues and machinations of the Board of Trade who for reasons, by this time well-known to you will oppose a Contract of that nature, but "Delendum est Carthago"; that Board abolished, the Company's concerns will soon wear another aspect"¹⁷.

Smith was not content with agitation. We have a letter from Murdoch Brown, Factor at Mangalore to him, dated 30 January 1786, giving details of smuggling cargo into the dominions of Tipu Sultan, where there seems to have been an embargo on private trade in the fashion of the Mughal rulers. Smith also gave Dundas a personal account of how trade barriers in Canton had been breached through "Quankyua" one of the principal traders at Canton¹⁸. It is curious to find the President of the Board of Control receiving information about free trade smuggling into foreign countries where the Company was supposed to have a monopoly of British trade. The letters of Smith are also full of descriptions of trading conditions in the coastal areas

16. Ms. 1060, f. 204, *et. seq.*; for secrecy of the correspondence, cf. especially ff. 224-25, letter of William Cabell, from the India Board to George Smith, 21-7-1786.

17. *ibid.* f. 205, George Smith to Dundas, 27-4-1785.

18. *ibid.* ff. 222-23; ff. 226-35.

he visited, notably Ceylon where the Dutch still held sway, Mysore, Malaya and the Canton littoral. About Mysore he writes that Tipu had placed an embargo on the British and Dutch export of pepper, sandalwood, cardamom, or "Plantes" and timbers, "which nearly amounts to a prohibition of the trade, that of his country depending chiefly on barter and money, but rarely its medium" (George Smith to Dundas, 12 March 1785, pp. 210-18) — rather obscure statement which may be studied for an idea of the processes by which commodity production was regulated on an exchange basis.

Ms. 1064 is comprised of two parts, a general survey of trade with India from 1787 to 1812, especially cotton, rice and private trade; and letters on the debts of the Nawab of Carnatic in 1794 and 1808-10. On f. 1, there is some material on copper prices, and on ff. 8-9, 11, 19 and 47 respectively, there are tabulated figures of the "*Average Prime Cost and Sale Amount of Cotton Yarn imported from India in the following Seasons, 1774-1783 (for Bengal and Bombay); the Cost and Sale of the Quantity of Cotton that has ever been imported by the Company from India with an account of the Profit and Loss thereon*"; accounts of the quantity of articles like Barilla, Gum Arabic, Galls, Madder, Valonia, Indigo, etc. (probably used in the manufacture of cotton)—"*imported into Great Britain in the year ending the 5th of January, 1788, distinguishing the places from whence imported*"; and an "*Amount of the Sales of Muslins and Calicoes (including Private Trade from 1783 to 1787 imported from each Presidency in India*". There is much correspondence in this set of papers on the controversy between the cotton manufacturers of Northern Britain, who had recently come to prominence and wholesale buyers from the Company stretching from ff. 3-105. This includes an account of the processes of cotton cultivation, production, and marketing in Bengal (ff. 71-79).

Ms. 1065 bears the imposing title of "a Breviate of a selection of passages from the Company's records concerning the Nabob of Arcot, the characters of his sons, and the attempt to set aside the succession settled by the Mogul's Phurmaund". This is also catalogued as having been received bound. We have already noted that there is some correspondence on the Nawab's Debts from f. 222 of Ms. 1064. This material might be useful to a research worker who wishes to study the relationship of the Board with the debts after Burke's famous speech in the Parliament in 1785 on the Arcot Debts, when he alleged that they were generally in the nature of collusive contracts. The Minute Book of the Board of Control, Vol. 1, available in the India Office Library, London, shows that in 1784, soon after the formation of the Board, its Commissioners

asked for a selection to be made which would be like the one we have noted. The "Breviate" was perhaps prepared from the larger work by Russell, the Solicitor to the Board and his assistants, for the personal use of Dundas, the Indian expert on the Board.

Mss. 1066 to 1071 deal with shipping and foreign policy; significantly enough, foreign policy seems to be connected with overland and shipping routes to India. Ms. 1066 is specifically catalogued as containing material on ship-building, sailings, personnel, victualling, cargoes, harbours and the supply of timber in the East; there is also reported evidence on the dealings of the Royal Navy with the Company and other matters connected with Eastern waters. This material stretches from 1786 to 1817, and is also available for 1825. The 2nd Viscount was First Lord of the Admiralty for a long time between his short tenures of office at the Board of Control; if the statistics that Henry Dundas was able to get from assorted sources for his policy on cotton imports and comparative tariffs are any guide, there should be ample and accurate evidence on shipping as well. Ms. 1067 is a separate volume which contains a memorial by J. Prinsep the noted entrepreneur, who had the Company's support in his plans for the expansion of the indigo trade, shipping projects, etc., on "a plan for the naval defence of the British possessions in the East Indies by ships of India construction to be built out of the revenues and to be supported out of the commerce of Asia". This was submitted in 1796, only 11 years after Lord Sydney, the first Chairman of the Board had written as Secretary of State in his first despatch to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury on 18 August 1786 announcing the decision of the British Government to establish a convict colony at Botany Bay in Australia, that "It may also be proper to attend to the possibility of procuring from New Zealand any quantity of masts and ship timber for the use of our fleets in India as the distance between our two countries is not greater than between Great Britain and America"¹⁹.

This is another example of the community of feeling which bound together the administration of the British Empire, however loosely it might be.

Dundas belongs to the early period of British imperial statesmen, who were gradually shaking themselves free from the mercantilist ideas which still influenced theories of government. He matured his

19. Manning Clark, *Sources of Australian History* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 69 & 75.

policy under the strains of the American Revolution, the period of British economic recovery between the wars, and the final shock of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.

Mss. 1068 and 1069 are not tabulated under the heading of India as they ostensibly deal with the Near East. But a study of the description of Mss. 1070 and 1071 in the Catalogue will show us the intimate connection of the Near East with British Indian foreign policy even a century and a half ago.

"1070 *The Cape Route to India*

- (i) Canary Islands, 1797 (f. 1)
- (ii) St. Helena, 1788-1812 (f. 4)
- (iii) Cape of Good Hope, 1782-1810 (f. 22)
- (iv) Mauritius and Bourbon, 1787-1812 (f. 75)

1071 *The Near East*. (i) Routes to India by the Red sea and overland, the possibilities of a French or Russian attack on India from the north-west, the missions of John Malcolm and Sir Harford Jones to Persia, and affairs in Greece, Turkey and Afghanistan, etc. 1790-1810."

It will be evident that much work yet remains to be done on Dundas as an imperial statesman, and he cannot be neglected, as he seems to have been to some degree, as one of the few people within the penumbra of Pitt during the Ministry of that statesman. Lord Rosebery observes about the latter "Dundas and Grenville were alone admitted to his confidence"²⁰. What is more significant is that Dundas and Grenville among themselves controlled, at some time or the other before Pitt's death, most of the high offices connected with India and the Empire, and that before Pitt or Grenville had left college Dundas was prominent in controlling practically all the Parliamentary influence of Scotland, the Lord Advocate's office in Scotland, and most of the plans for India reform in the period of legislative crisis.

We have finally to deal with a very large section of the Melville Papers, the correspondence between Dundas and various high officials in the Company's service in India. This might contain material of miscellaneous historical interest and needs to be systematically combed for it in the same way as other private collections are being treated by modern historians. Mss. 1-67 have already been dealt with.

Ms. 2257 is listed as containing letters, chiefly to the 1st Lord Melville from Colonel William Fullarton, on Indian regimental and personal matters and the affairs of Colonel Picton, 1783-1807; from and regarding Robert Haldane with special reference to missionary

20. Lord Rosebery, *Pitt*, (London, 1929), p. 109.

enterprise in 1796-97; and from John Wauchope of Edmondstone regarding Major-General Patrick Wauchope, 1807. These extend from ff. 21-59. I have mentioned the first set of letters with reference to the grievances of the Army.

Ms. 2956, ff. 119-37, has letters to Dundas in the period 1793 to 1803 mainly from (so it seems from the internal evidence of these unsigned letters) David Scott, the celebrated Director of the East India Company with whom he was involved over the regulation of private trade towards the end of the tenure of his office.

Mss. 3385-88 consist of letters written by Lord Cornwallis as Governor General of India to Henry Dundas from 1786 to 1794, and also copies of his replies. There are also abstracts of Cornwallis' letters in a separate volume, Ms. 3388. The letters themselves are in Ms. 3385 (there is an additional letter at f. 54 of Ms. 3053), while all enclosures sent by Cornwallis are systematically filed in Ms. 3386. As these enclosures were mostly composed by the Governor General's subordinates, and British officials had the practice of submitting copious reports, there is much evidence on the administration of justice by magistrates in criminal cases in several districts in the year 1789-90. There are also copies of the letters which Dundas wrote to Lord Cornwallis in 1786-92 (Ms. 3387). Taken together, this correspondence forms a useful record of Government cognisance of India affairs in the period of Cornwallis' first tenure of office. They have been extensively used by Aspinall in his *Cornwallis in Bengal*²¹ but with the limited object indicated in the title; some extracts from these letters have been printed in the 19th century collection of the *Cornwallis Correspondence*²² by Charles Ross; but the volume of enclosures we have noted does not seem to have been made full use of, and as the catalogue of the National Library points out, there are errors in Ross' transcriptions, while a new edition is long overdue.

Ms. 3387 is headed "Governor-Generals". It also contains letters from Dundas to Lord Mornington (later the Marquess of Wellesley) 1798-99, and to Sir John Shore, 1793-97, thus forming the continuous record of Dundas' letters to India from 1786-99; though it is unfinished and the last two years of presidentship of the Board of Control are missing. The letters from Dundas to Shore need to be read in unison with the "*Private Record of an Indian Governor-Generalship*" by Holden Furber.

21. Aspinall, A. *Cornwallis in Bengal* (Manchester, 1931).

22. Ross, C., *The Correspondence of Lord Cornwallis* (London, 1859).

The final volume in this type of correspondence is Ms. 3837. This is the correspondence of Sir Archibald Campbell who was Governor of Madras from 1786 to 1789 with Henry Dundas who had practically nominated him to the post. The collection includes lengthy memoranda and minutes by Campbell and others, deals in considerable detail with the civil and military affairs of Madras and covers such subjects as relations with the French, the Dutch and the Indian princes, finance, trade, army appointments and topography; and is arranged in mainly chronological order. The value of such an account for a purely local history of Madras in the years after the governorship of Macartney will be obvious.

It is interesting to note that the private correspondents of the President of the Board of Control for India ranged from a merchant like George Smith through wholesale Cheapside merchants relying on the Company's imports, and financiers like Sir Francis Baring to the Governor of Madras. All of them supplied Dundas with regular information which Dundas was constrained to organize on an extra-departmental basis. One wonders what sort of commentary this provides on the Board of Control.

In conclusion, it seems that there is enough scope for editing these documents. The logical way they are filed at present, would facilitate the task of editing. The Dundas Papers might be a useful nucleus for a few new editions and re-editions of documents on Indian history. Another immediate necessity is for an annotated calendar of papers relating to Indian history in the collection.

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NEWS NOTES

INDIA

National Archives of India

Among the principal non-current records received by the National Archives during the year were those of the Salt Commissioner's Office, 1926-47; Central India States Agency, 1909-54; Rajasthan Counsellor's Office, 1931-54; Regional Commissioner, Madhya Bharat and Rajasthan, 1916-54; Home Department, Political, 1936-37; Ministry of Defence, 1871-1940; 25 Maps of the Miscellaneous Series received from the Survey of India, Dehra Dun; and 250 Bills of Parts A, B & C, States duly assented to by the President.

142 photostats of Mahatma Gandhi's private correspondence with Mrs. Esther Menon covering the period 1917-40 were presented to the Archives by the Danish Government. Among the other interesting acquisitions may be mentioned a letter from Lord William Beresford, Military Secretary to the Government of India, to J. W. Smith, dated 6 December 1888; a copy of Lt. Robert Warburton's Journal on the Kabul insurrection; Lt. Col. Houghton's Journal on the battle of Chareekah; a Journal on a journey from Ferozepur to Kutwas by an unknown writer; and a memoir of Lady Suagge (1826-1914), together with an album containing 31 paintings.

158 reels of microfilms from the British Museum, London, 8 reels from Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, and 92 reels from Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague, were received during the year.

There were two sessions of the short course in Archive-Keeping conducted by the Department, and 26 persons took the training. The one year Diploma Course was also conducted with 5 students on the roll. Three students who underwent training in the previous year were awarded diplomas.

The following publications which are in the press made steady progress, viz., Vols. I, II, and IX of *Fort William—India House Correspondence*; Vol. I of *Index to the Records of the Foreign and Political Department*, 1756-80; and Vol. X of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, 1792-93. It is expected that a couple of these would be published during the coming year. Vol. XIII of *Fort William—India House Correspondence* has been got ready and is expected to be sent to the press shortly.

The Department's programme of having all old and important records series microfilmed is going ahead. At present Foreign Department records are being microfilmed.

Over 3,000 books and periodicals were added to the Library. Besides, 309 valuable historical and reference publications were received from the United States of America under the Wheat Loan Educational Exchange Programme. The External Affairs Ministry transferred 883 volumes for accession to the Library.

A number of improvements were effected on the technical side. An oil-fired boiler was installed and the operation of the hydraulic laminating press commenced.

The National Archives of India participated in the All India Educational Exhibition organised in connection with the Ninth General Conference of the UNESCO held at Delhi from 5 November 1956.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Republic of India, paid a visit to the Archives on 19 April 1956, and evinced great interest in the work of the Department.

The foundation stone of the building for the new Regional Office at Bhopal was laid by the Chief Commissioner of Bhopal on 2 March 1956. The ceremony was attended by many distinguished persons including Dr. S. D. Sharma, Chief Minister of Bhopal, and Her Highness the senior Begum of Bhopal. An exhibition of interesting collections of records, maps, plans and seals was held on the occasion.

Indian Historical Records Commission

The thirty-second annual session of the Indian Historical Records Commission was held at the Senate Hall of the Patna University, Patna, on 27-28 February 1956. Owing to the unavoidable absence of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *ex-officio* President of the Commission, the Public Meeting was presided over by Shri K. G. Saiyidain, Educational Adviser and Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Education. The session was inaugurated by His Excellency Shri R. R. Diwakar, Governor of Bihar.

In his presidential address, Shri Saiyidain, surveyed briefly the achievements of the National Archives of India in the various branches of its activities. While emphasizing the need for a fresh approach to Indian history he said: "The great heritage of ideas, values and institutions which is embedded in our historical records, should be studied with the care that befits a scholar, the objectivity which is characteristic of the scientist and the reverence which a humanist brings to the study of all that pertains to the study of man in his social setting. We have still to embark on the great adventure of writing a really balanced and interpretative history of our people which must eschew both the old sense of national inferiority, which dogged the mind of many of our historians during the last hundred years and the new and rather dangerous tendency to be either parochial or too complacently nationalist in our approach".

The Members Meeting presided over by Dr. B. S. Baliga began with a resolution of condolence on the death of Father H. Heras, one of the oldest members of the Commission, and Dr. P. C. Bagchi, Vice-Chancellor of the Visva-Bharati University, a member of the Commission since 1952.

The Secretary then gave the Commission an account of the work done by the National Archives of India during 1955. In view of the importance of regional history for the reconstruction of the history of the country as a

whole, the Commission passed a resolution recommending that "the States where Record Offices have not yet been set up so far be requested to establish Record Offices with facilities for research to *bona fide* research scholars so that the work on the regional history may be expedited". At the suggestion of Dr. S. N. Sen, it further resolved that all those States which found it difficult to establish Record Offices should be requested to transfer their record collections to the Government of India who would preserve them at their respective centres in the same way as was being done in the case of Bhopal records.

Research and Publication Committee

The twenty-fifth meeting of the Research and Publication Committee was held on 28 February 1956 at the Senate Hall, Patna University, Patna, with Dr. B. S. Baliga in the chair. With regard to the publication of records in Oriental Languages, under Scheme III (a) of the publication programme of the National Archives of India, the Secretary brought it to the notice of the Committee that the *Kannada Letters* contained no information of historical value. In view of this the Committee recommended that their publication should be dropped from the publication programme.

The Governments of Assam, Madhya Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir set up permanent Regional Records Survey Committees during the year. While considering the reports of these and other Regional Committees, the Research and Publication Committee recommended that the Regional Committees should consist of only such persons as were genuinely interested in historical research and could help in salvaging historical material from private custody. By another resolution the Committee recommended that a list of microfilm copies of records of Indian interest obtained by the National Archives of India from abroad may be supplied to the State Record Offices, Universities, and Research Institutions. In modification of resolution V passed at the 24th meeting of the Research and Publication Committee, it was also resolved that the State Governments be requested to arrange through their Universities and Research Institutions the compilation and publication of bibliographies of their respective regions for the use of students and scholars and that the copies be supplied to all organised State Record Offices, Universities and Research Institutions.

Andhra Pradesh

With the formation of the State of Andhra Pradesh from 1 November the Central Record Office, Hyderabad passed over to the new state government.

The most outstanding acquisition of the Office during the year was "Salar Jang Papers", a miscellaneous collection got together by Nawab Salar Jang, Prime Minister of Hyderabad State, 1853-83. The collection includes some papers belonging to Asaf Jahi dynasty and letters written by State

The purchase of a building in the vicinity of the Calcutta University for the proposed Central Record Office was approved by the State Government. A scheme for the reorganization of the State Archives has been drawn up and will be implemented as a part of the Second Five Year Plan.

Writings of Gandhiji

The Government of India has decided to publish a complete edition of Mahatma Gandhi's writings, speeches and letters, in three series. The first will be in the language in which the Mahatma originally wrote and spoke. The other two will be in English and Hindi.

INTERNATIONAL

Third International Congress on Archives

The third International Conference on Archives was held in Florence from 25 to 29 November 1956 under the chairmanship of Count Riccardo Filangieri, Inspector General of Italian State Archives. Over 600 delegates from about forty countries participated in the Conference. Three subjects of importance were discussed viz., "New Buildings for Archives" (Rapporteur: Mr. Ingvar Andersson, Director of the Royal Swedish Archives); "Selection of Archives for Preservation" (Rapporteur: Mr. J. H. Collingridge, Records Administration Officer, Public Record Office, London); and "Private Archives" (Rapporteur: Count Riccardo Filangieri). Arrangement was made for the first time for simultaneous translation of the addresses into English, French, Italian, Spanish, German and Russian.

In the discussion that followed, great interest was evinced in the subject of archival buildings, and it was proposed to devote Vol. VI (1956) of *Archivum* to its consideration.

Cultural Committee of the Council of Europe

The Cultural Committee of the Council of Europe has taken the initiative in organizing the microfilming of Library and Archives catalogues and inventories in its various European member-states. This action follows the recommendations of a meeting of specialists held in Dublin in September 1955.

UNESCO Regional Conference

The first regional conference of representatives of the National Commission for UNESCO in Asia was held at Tokyo, Japan, from 28 February to 3 March 1956, and one of its recommendations was that the UNESCO should compile catalogues or bibliographies of documents concerning the history of Asian countries now existing in European archives.

BELGIUM

Archives generales du Royaume

M. Etienne Sabbe, Keeper of Records of the State of Anvers, was appointed Archivist General on 22 November 1955 in succession to M. Camille Tihon.

CEYLON

Central Archives, Nuwara Eliya

Under the Colombo Plan, Mr. S. M. Cockerell of Britain visited the Central Archives and gave intensive training to the staff for three months in the latest methods of manuscript repair, archival hand-binding and related subjects.

Accessions during the year include non-current files from Batticaloa, Mannar and Kalutara Kachchis and Land Commissioner's Department.

A detailed index to the volumes of the three series of *Tombu Registrations* of the Western Sea-board areas of the Dutch period has been brought out recently.

It is proposed to build a new archival repository near the Cancer Hospital in Colombo District.

The work of compiling a descriptive catalogue of collections in private custody has been undertaken under the auspices of the Historical Manuscripts Commission of Ceylon. Many documents of historical value were unearthed in *viharas* and other institutions. They were duly recorded in the National Register of Archives with full descriptions. Documents in an advanced stage of decay were repaired and photo-copied before they were returned to their respective owners.

EGYPT

A Documentation and Study Centre for the History of the Art and Civilization of Ancient Egypt has been established at Cairo. The Centre's main object is to prepare a catalogue in a systematic way of every surviving vestige of Egyptian art. The catalogue, when prepared, will be made available to scholars and research workers all over the world.

MAURITIUS

Archives Department

The quarterly *Memoranda* of Mauritian imprints and the *Annual Report* for 1954 were issued by the Department during 1955. A number of photo-copies of old pictures of Mauritius were produced by the Mauritius Archives Publication Fund Committee. A bibliographical survey of materials relative to Mauritius was carried out and the results are to be published

in the forthcoming volume *Bibliography of Mauritius, 1502-1954*. In order to keep the *Bibliography* up-to-date, it is proposed to issue, as an appendix to the annual report of the Department, a bibliographical supplement incorporating additional materials which come to light from year to year.

UNITED KINGDOM

The Committee on Departmental Records

The recommendations of the Committee on Departmental Records were placed for the consideration of the Parliament early in 1955, and their implications are being examined by the Government. While the Government is disposed to accept the methods recommended for proper preservation of the records of the Government Departments in England and Wales, the proposal that the opening of records to the public after 50 years of their creation should be automatic unless a Department wished any class of its own records to be excluded from the operation of this rule is still under examination.

J. H. Collingridge was appointed to the new post of Records Administration Officer and is charged with the oversight of records before their transfer to the Public Record Office.

Public Record Office, London

The working of the scheme of intermediate repositories is showing good results. As a result of the policy of storing at Ashridge certain classes of records (irrespective of date), for which there is little demand by searchers, 3,678 foot-run of records were transferred there from the Chancery Lane. The total foot-space of records transferred from the Government Departments fell to 1,642 during 1955 from 7,840 feet in 1954. 32 Departments were storing records in the three intermediate Repositories at Hayes, Yeading and Leake Street. The Ministry of Supply and the Treasury Solicitor's Office made use of these repositories for the first time. The total foot-run of shelving filled with records in the three repositories rose from 4,69,000 to 5,72,000.

At the Chancery Lane a new storage room for maps and plans was brought into use; the lower floor is fitted with steel racking for the larger rolled maps; the upper floor with steel plan-presses and a large inspection table. The room is expected to hold 1,500 rolled maps and 6,000 maps stored flat in the presses.

Curia Regis Rolls, Vol. XI and *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, Edward III, Vol. XIII, were published during 1955. Giuseppi's *Guide to the Public Records* is being revised, and the text of the new edition is expected to be ready by the end of 1956.

Historical Manuscripts Commission

The Commission's most active work continues to be done mainly through the National Register of Archives, in visits of inspection, in advice

to owners and in arrangements for the deposit of manuscripts in approved repositories. The periodical *Bulletins* of the Register include an annual list of the manuscripts received by national and local repositories. The work of the Register has lately been facilitated by the use of a dyeline photo-printing machine which enables it to reproduce and circulate existing lists or catalogues hitherto not normally available for study.

The sixth conference of the National Register of Archives was held at Vintner's Hall on 22 March 1956. An exhibition showing the progress of the Register's work was arranged for the occasion. At the formal meeting presided over by Sir Hilary Jenkinson, Mr. S. D. Freer, the Assistant Registrar, spoke of the Newcastle Papers, formerly at Clumber and now deposited in Nottingham University Library through the agency of the Register. Other important speeches included one made by Miss Alison Reeve on the records of the Foundling Hospital and another by H. M. Colvin on the National Register as seen by a historian and user of documents. The conference concluded with a speech from the Master of the Rolls.

Society of Archivists

The first conference of the newly reconstituted Society of Archivists was held at York on 13-14 May 1955. An excellent exhibition of documents from the York Diocesan Record Office was arranged on the occasion.

The Society of Archivists has appointed a Committee to deal with the technical aspects of archives administration. The Committee is composed of Roger Ellis, Chairman, Miss E. D. Mercer, Secretary, and three other members. It has on its panel several specialist advisers. The Committee's services would be available to the members of the British Records Association.

British Records Association

The Annual General Meeting of the British Records Association was held on 12 December 1955 with Mr. Evershed, the Master of the Rolls, in the chair. At the annual general meeting of the Records Preservation Section Mr. John Shearman spoke on a new subject of great interest for Archivists—the Archives of Motoring. Several speakers emphasised the importance of such records because of the revolution which had come about in the way of life as a result of the invention of the internal combustion engine. Mr. Shearman expressed a hope that the British Records Association would set up a joint committee with other organizations concerned to encourage the preservation of motoring records. Sir Hilary Jenkinson, thinking the speaker, remarked that the Association could help to find out what the historian wanted to have preserved and where the archivist should look for motoring archives.

At the Technical Discussion Meeting on 13 December 1955 Mr. Tottle brought specimens of apparatus which might be used to test and control the

"climate"—temperature and humidity of a strong room. The instruments included a dehumidifier, a sling hygrometer, wet and dry bulb thermometer, a silica-gel "breather" and an electric convector heater. A brisk discussion ensued regarding relative humidity, mould growth, and air-conditioning in strong rooms.

"The Historian and the Local Record Office" was the subject chosen for the Discussion Meeting of the Association. Sir Frank Stenton who opened the discussion pointed out that, although national and local records were quite distinct, the distinction was one of origin and not of any basic importance. Local record offices had much to offer to the historian, particularly in the field of social history. Mr. Rathbone suggested that local record offices should function as part of a national net-work and avoid division of a record group among themselves. Mr. Reddaway said that the historian could help the archivist by supplying to the record office a copy of his thesis and giving information of important documents in private hands. Miss Sinar added that the historian could help the archivist greatly by telling him what he was working on.

Anglo-American Conference of Historians

The annual Anglo-American Conference of Historians attended by nearly 400 persons was held from 12 to 14 July 1956. The general session was addressed by Professor Herbert Butterfield, the main theme of his address being "George III and the 19th century historians". Twelve papers were read at the different sections of the Conference which were devoted to medieval English, modern British, medieval European, modern European, Colonial, and American history. At the final General meeting Mr. M. F. Bond, Clerk of the Records, House of Lords, read a paper on "Record Offices to-day: facts for historians". As at previous conferences an exhibition of historical works published in Great Britain during the preceding twelve months was held.

Demonstration Bindery

The School of Librarianship and Archives, University College, London, has opened a Demonstration Bindery at the College under the supervision and direction of Mr. Sydney M. Cockerell. The main purpose is to demonstrate to students and librarians the principles of book construction, the strength of materials and the repair of valuable books and manuscripts and to give general assistance in repair and binding problems.

AUSTRALIA

Commonwealth Archives Committee

The work of the Commonwealth Archives Committee is proceeding, and its report on the permanent archives system in Australia is expected early.

The over-all rate of accessioning rose very considerably during 1955-56 in the various repositories. If the present progress is maintained it is expected that within the next two years the main objective—to have in custody all records of the Commonwealth departments up to 1929—will be attained.

A new repository at Karakatta, Perth, has been completed. It will start functioning early in 1957. A survey is being conducted to ascertain whether a repository is required at Hobart.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

National Archives and Records Service

The Supreme Court of the United States has decided to deposit its records in the National Archives, and the transfer of its old records has commenced.

Two pamphlets—*The Archivists' Code* and *Applying Records Schedules*—have been issued. National Archives *Accessions* No. 52, listing records accessioned between 1 July 1953 and 30 June 1955 has been published. With a view to standardize Professional terminology, the National Archives has issued a preliminary draft of the *Glossary of Records Terminology*. It will be finalized after the comments and suggestions of the archivists and records officers have been obtained.

The National Archives and Records Service in cooperation with the Federal Supply Service is developing improved office equipment and supplies needed by the Federal Government. *Federal Standard* No. 95 published during the year established 5-drawer filing cabinets as standard for Government use.

Theodore R. Schellenberg, Director of Archival Management, was awarded a 1955 merit citation by the National Civil Service League.

Library of Congress

The Library was the recipient of several collections of personal papers. Of them, mention may be made of the papers of Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, late Air Force Chief of Staff; Gen. George Van Horn Moseley of World War I fame; Gen. Charles P. Summerall also of World War I, and James J. Davies, Secretary of Labour, 1921-30. Naval Historical Foundation papers, placed in the Library on long-term deposit, were augmented by further important additions, viz., 20 papers of Josiah Fox, naval architect who helped in designing the frigates authorized by the Congress in 1794; 41 letters of Capt. Horace Bucklin Sawyer, 1813-38; 45 papers of Commodore James Barron, 1831-49; and about 650 papers of Commander Arthur Stanley Riggs. The Library has also received the papers of late Samuel Whittemore Boggs, Geographer of the Department of State, 1924-54 and an authority on the cataloguing of maps and on international boundaries. Other accessions included the papers of Oscar Terry Crosby, Asstt. Secretary of the Treasury under President Wilson, and the papers of Julius A. Krug when he was

with the Federal Communications Commission, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the War Production Board, 1942-45. Transcripts of documents in the Archives at Simancas and other Spanish repositories are among the 4,500 manuscripts of the late Hispanic American scholar, William R. Shepherd, presented to the Library.

Lester K. Born, Co-ordinator in the Library's micro-reproduction project, has resigned from the Library to serve as Cultural Affairs Officer, United States Embassy, Manila, P. I.

German Foreign Ministry Documents

German Foreign Ministry Archives lodged in England during World War II will be shortly repatriated to Germany. Parts of these archives which cover the period 1867-1920 are now available in the form of microfilms from the University of California Library, Berkeley. The selections which have been microfilmed centre round Anglo-German and German-American relations in the Bismarck period.

PRESERVATION AND PHOTODUPLICATION

Listomatic Camera

The Kodak Listomatic Camera facilitates the publication of repetitive lists such as catalogues, bibliographies, lists etc. This camera enables the user to maintain the entries on individual tabulating cards in a standard card file, where revisions, additions, and deletions are done in the usual manner. To publish the list the prepared cards are run through the machine. The camera automatically photographs the listing in columns of pre-determined length, at approximately 230 cards per minute on a continuous 400-foot roll of film. This film, after normal photographic processing, is cut into columns, made up into page formats and used as the negative from which to make standard offset printing plates.

New Microcard Reader

The Microtext Publishing Corporation, New York, has manufactured a new, inexpensive, pocket-size, compact microcard reader, with which the user can read microcards whenever he desires. The reader has a wide field 12 × lens, and weighs 7 oz. with batteries.

Collating Machine

The British Museum has installed in the Department of Printed Books an electrically operated collating machine. Two theoretically identical copies of a book are opened at the same page, placed on baize-covered platforms under a powerful lamp. The platforms are adjusted by hand-operated gadgets and are moved in such a fashion as to produce coincided image on a central screen. When the images are alternated rapidly, so that they appear to the eye to be superimposed, any difference in setting between the two copies leaps to the eye.

BOOK REVIEWS

Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency, 1793-1833, by Amales Tripathi
(Orient Longmans, Calcutta, 1956; pp. 289; price Rs. 20).

One of the most disheartening gaps in Indian historical and economic scholarship is in the field of economic history. Our historical scholars have done valuable work in reconstructing the story of our political and social development, and our economists have often engaged themselves in the study of the history of particular segments of modern economic life. But we do not yet have a comprehensive and integrated economic history of the country. In regard to the ancient and medieval periods, this gap has mainly been due to the lack of source material which would be adequate for the building up of a comprehensive and chronologically flowing story. All that is possible perhaps is the reconstruction of the picture of the economic life of the people at particular stages, as in case of Moreland's works or of some recent research publications dealing with ancient India. It is a continuous or near-continuous series of such pictures that create economic history and it is doubtful if it will ever be possible to write a real economic history of India in the pre-British days.

This, however, does not apply to the British period, and if Dr. Tripathi's work is a guide, it appears that extremely valuable investigations can be undertaken on the basis of published reports and unpublished documents relating to the working of the East India Company in India and of the other related or interested organisations. The only noteworthy attempt that was made in the past to utilise this material, particularly the parliamentary papers, for writing a systematic economic history of India was that of R. C. Dutt, while all others who used this material wrote on selectional problems, like those of land revenue settlement. A few of our younger scholars had tried to widen the coverage, but they were handicapped by the fact that most of the source material was not available in India.

Dr. Tripathi's attempt is notable because of the thoroughness with which he has examined the source material, including the documents relating to the Agency Houses, and the open academic approach with which he has tried to analyse the data. R. C. Dutt did an outstanding piece of work, but his two books did not really become economic history, first because they did not have the comprehensive coverage without which history is never meaningful and secondly because he was seeking throughout to prove a particular thesis. Dr. Tripathi has, on the other hand, tried to cover his subject very fully, and he has allowed the facts he has marshalled to speak for themselves and to present their own picture.

The picture that has emerged is exceedingly complex, and is intriguingly interesting because of its complexities. Instead of a simple bold-line picture of a cool, calculating foreign power seeking to establish political and economic domination over a poor, incompetent and divided people, we get the picture

of the interaction of numerous conflicting interests, a complex polygon of forces bringing about a result which is far removed from what it would have been if any one of these forces had been absolutely dominant. There were the broad general conflicts between Parliament and the East India Company, and between private trade and Company trade. There were superimposed on all this the clashes of interest between the Agency Houses and other British interests, between the owners of India-built ships and those of British ships and between British and non-British trade. There were intertwined with this complex network the opposing interests of many different private groups in India and in England and the personal rivalries among the policymakers both in Calcutta and in London.

It was within the unstable and uncertain structure resulting from the operation of all these forces that trade took place, capital came in for local investment, profit remittances were made, expenditures were undertaken and money borrowed and lent. Dr. Tripathi has taken great pains to emphasize the important role of profit-remittances in trading and other policies. An economist who tries to apply his present-day technique of balance-of-payments analysis to the situation described by the author will of course be baffled. He will note the difficulties of the 'transfer problem' for a country which was a net importer of gold, but it will not be clear to him why the problem of profit-remittance was difficult, if profits arose from the export trade itself and were earned in foreign currency. It would seem that there would be a 'transfer problem' to the extent that profits arose in India, or in the rupee-account trade; it is possible that these profits were substantial, and if some future research scholar would isolate the net foreign currency earnings from East India trade (Company and private) from the rupee earnings, it may become possible to undertake an interesting study of India's balance of payments problems in the early 19th century.

It is here that the reader—or at least the reader who is primarily an economist—has his greatest difficulty, and it is probable that Dr. Tripathi also faced his most important obstacle in isolating meaningful categories from the accounts kept by the East India Company. It is extremely difficult to get a coherent meaning out of the Company's accounts as presented in the book. There is first of all the problem of currency conversion, of comparison, for different places and times of the value-categories stated in the local and current rupee, the *sicca* rupee and the pound sterling. The solution of this difficulty will be laborious, but not absolutely unmanageable; it is the other difficulties which create greater problems. One of the most important of these is terminological. Terms like 'investment' were used in the Company's accounts and reports in senses which are narrower or wider than, and sometimes absolutely different from, their accepted meanings. The very important category 'profit' has nowhere been defined and one gets little indication of the way in which profits were computed. Besides, one does not get any idea about profits as a percentage of the capital invested, or even as a percentage of 'investment' in the Company-account sense. The budgetary accounts also leave the economist unsatisfied, because

he is not quite clear about the exact residue which is described sometimes as a 'territorial surplus', or about the major components of the so-called 'extraordinary receipts'.

What has been said above is not intended to include the deficiencies in Dr. Tripathi's work, but rather to emphasize the difficulties he must have faced and submitted to. The difficulties of definition have naturally created difficulties of comparison. One of the most conspicuous gaps in the picture presented by Dr. Tripathi is that while there is a profusion of detailed trade statistics for particular time-segments, for particular ports and sometimes for separate destinations and origins, one looks in vain for a simple continuous time-series which seeks to relate significant aggregates for all the years and for the entire period. It is not possible for the reviewer to judge how difficult the task of deriving such a time-series would have been, and it is easily possible that the presently available data can provide nothing more than what the reader gets in Dr. Tripathi's book. There is, however, a very good case for a thorough examination of the available raw data by trained statisticians, and it is not unlikely that both historians and economists will benefit from such basic work.

The economist gets in Dr. Tripathi's book much that is highly interesting to him and notes that many of the problems of the present-day world were troubling people in the early 19th century. Alternatively, it is possible that inconvertible currencies, trade and payment restrictions and the new monopoly elements have combined to transplant the mid-twentieth century to the early nineteenth. One notes the extent to which what is known now as 'switch trade' was carried on a century and a half ago. One notes how the grant of favourable rates of exchange to the lenders to the government created in effect what would now be described as a multiple currency practice. And one also gets interested in the sensitivity of the bond market to the accumulation of short loan funds in the hands of private traders in India. In these many small details of information, the economist gets an appetising foretaste of a variety of fare which he hopes will be available some day in its rich plenty.

Dr. Tripathi's contribution towards the building up of a full economic history of India is undoubtedly great. If the book appears at times to be too full of facts, it has to be remembered that some one has to take the first and essential step of collecting the facts and putting them together. One can legitimately expect that the present book will not be the last work of Dr. Tripathi on this subject. As it stands, the book provides history as history always is, a story of many strands, some harmonising and some at cross purposes with others, appearing to baffle all attempts to discover a unitary or general theme. It is, however, possible to hold that the historian's task does not end with the detailed narration of a complex story. It is worthwhile in almost all cases to seek to find out what may be called the trend-elements—the course of the curve that is compounded of the innumerable component curves which fluctuate or move, explicably

at times and with inexplicable erraticness at others. Once the details have been collected, the very important task of inference and interpretation remains to be undertaken. The high order of ability shown by Dr. Tripathi in collecting and presenting his data makes one confident that he is pre-eminently qualified to satisfy his readers' further expectations by his future work.

BHABATOSH DATTA

Imago Mundi, A Review of Early Cartography, Vol. XII, Edited by Leo Bagrow (Holland, 1956; pp. 192, plates 32; price 62 guilders).

Volume XII of *Imago Mundi* provides a rich feast for all who are interested in the science of cartography, or the art of map-making, or the adventures of travellers and navigators who had the privilege of contributing to man's knowledge of the world we live in. The maps described and reproduced come from all parts of the world, and date from the 14th to the 18th centuries. In spite of the age of the original maps, the legibility of the reproductions is remarkable, and the coloured map of the world by Cornelis Danckerts makes a beautiful picture.

The volume opens with an important professional review of the various forms of projection used in early maps, a subject that is generally most alarming to the unprofessional map-reader. Herr Keuning starts with a list of treatises on map projections that have been published in Europe and America between 1815 and 1938, but points out that these give but little attention to maps of the 15th and 16th centuries.

The 16th century saw the birth of many new maps, stimulated by the recent discovery of printing and, in 1511, by the first publication of Ptolemy's maps, whose various projections of his own design are here described. It was in this century that the famous Dutchman, Gerard Mercator (1512-94), devised his unusual projection for the special needs of ocean navigation, disregarding the distortion of shapes and areas. By adjustment of the ratio between scales of latitude and longitude he was able to show the position of all points, not only according to their correct geographical coordinates, but also with their correct mutual directions and distances apart. A reduction of one of his maps of the world faces page 104.

M. Marcel Destombes gives a most interesting account of a Portuguese chart of the southern hemisphere, found in the Topkapu Saray Library at Istanbul amongst ancient documents collected by the 'Turkish Sultans'. This is described as "The Chart of Magellan" and is proved from internal evidence to have been made for Magellan's historic voyage from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean cutting off the hazards of rounding Cape Horn by the safer passage through the strait that now bears his name.

A reduction of this circular chart faces page 65. It extends to the equator, but shows nothing of Australasia. It shows with a wealth of names the coasts of southern Africa that had been discovered between 1484 and 1500 by Diogo Cao, Bartholomeo Diaz, and Vasco da Gama. It shows

Madagascar which had been discovered by Alvarez Cabral in 1500. The Indian Ocean is named Mare Indicum. It shows the Atlantic coast of South America, first discovered by Cabral about 1500, with an abundance of names northward from Cape Santa Maria in latitude 23°S. It continues south without names, but bearing a legend attributing its discovery to Magellan. Nothing whatever is shown of the Pacific coast or of Magellan's later discoveries.

The only other geographical information on the chart is a part of the Malay Archipelago that is reproduced on a larger scale facing page 87. This shows considerable detail and many names, including the eastern end of Sumatra, here named Camatora, the Sunda Strait, the north coast of Java, and the string of islands eastward to the Celebes and the Spice Islands, or Moluccas, showing Amboina and Banda amongst others. A unique feature of this map is the location of the zero meridian of longitude to pass through the Moluccas, about 127½ degrees east of Greenwich, and this was done with a purpose.

In 1514 the Treaty of Torsedilas of 1494 was confirmed by the Pope, and "the Pole's line", 370 leagues west of Cape Verde Islands, or about 47½ degrees west of Greenwich, was declared to be the line of demarcation between Spanish and Portuguese possessions, Portugal to the east, Spain to the west. This line passed through the heart of Brazil, and if the Moluccas fell 175 degrees further west they would lie just five degrees inside the Portuguese hemisphere. Possession of the Moluccas, or Spice Islands was the main subject of controversy between Spain and Portugal from 1515 to 1530.

When in 1511 the Portuguese admiral Alphonso d'Albuquerque conquered Malacca in the Malay peninsula, he sent an expedition to explore the islands further east, and a second expedition reached the Moluccas in 1515 by way of the north coast of Java. Portugal claimed possession of all land discovered and occupied by her nationals in the East Indies, whatever the longitude.

Ferdinand Magellan had accompanied one of these expeditions to the Moluccas as a Portuguese officer, but after his return to Europe he had renounced his Portuguese service for that of Spain, offered his services to King Charles V of Spain to lead a Spanish expedition from the west with the view to proving the Spanish claim to those islands. He was assisted in his preparations by the Portuguese astronomer Ruy Faleiro.

Leaving Spain in August 1519 Magellan led his small squadron down the east coast of South America, and after trouble with mutinous officers made a memorable passage of the Magellan's Strait, of six weeks duration, to reach the Pacific Ocean. In March 1521 he brought his two remaining ships to the Philippines where he was killed in a scuffle with the islanders. His ships continued the voyage westward to complete their circumnavigation round the Cape of Good Hope, but as they passed the Moluccas, Magellan's papers were seized and sent home to King John at Lisbon.

A conference was held at Badajoz in Spain in 1524, attended by the most renowned astronomers and cartographers of the two countries, commissioned to trace a second demarcation line and to establish the true longitude of the Moluccas. This failed to come to agreement, and the dispute was settled in 1829 by the capitulation of Saragossa, under which Spain surrendered her claim to the Spice Islands in return for the payment of 350,000 golden ducats. A new demarcation line was provisionally traced to fall 17 degrees east of the Moluccas.

After discussing the known details of this story and making a detailed comparison with the maps of this period, M. Destombes comes to the conclusion that the Topkapu Saray chart was drawn by Pedro Reinel, a Portuguese cartographer, between 1522 and 1524, being copied from one drawn by himself in 1519 and that the set-up and projection had been laid out by Ruy Faleiro. Both of them are known to have taken part in the conferences before and after Magellan's expedition. M. Destombes finds this the first map to give so good a view of the southern hemisphere, and the only known Portuguese chart of the period between 1520 and 1530. It contains the original record of the discovery of the Cape Horn extremity of South America, and "is a capital document for the history of geographical discoveries and projections". The article concludes with a comparative table of all the place names with those of other maps.

On pages 139 to 149 is an account of the celebrations in Venice during 1954 of the 700th anniversary of the birth of Marco Polo, with an account of his several journeys to China between 1271 and 1292. Marco Polo drew no maps himself. His manuscript narratives were written during ten months imprisonment at Genoa, and were not incorporated into any maps until 1375, when the Spanish cartographer, Jaffuda Cresques made use of them in his Catalan Atlas of Charles V. Between 1450 and 1459 a map of the world embodying all the geographical information and all the place names contained in Marco Polo's narratives was prepared by Fra Mauro of the Monastery of Murano, an island near Venice.

On pages 157 to 159 Nicholas Poppe gives the history of two maps of Central Asia that are here reproduced. Early in the 18th century, when Charles XII of Sweden was defeated by Peter the Great at Poltava in the Ukraine, 1709, two Swedish officers, Philip Johan von Strahlenberg and Johan Gustav Renat, were taken prisoner and exiled to eastern Russia. Strahlenberg later returned to become an authority on the peoples and languages of eastern Russia. Renat, an artillery sergeant, was captured by the Kalmucks and held prisoner in their country west of the Caspian sea for seventeen years before returning to Sweden in 1734. He brought back with him two maps of Central Asia which then remained unknown to science for more than a century till 1878, when they were found in the library of Linkoping by the Swedish novelist Strindberg. Both maps were of Chinese origin; the first, R-1, had been copied by a Kalmuck from a Chinese original, and was presented to Renat by the Kalmuck ruler. The second, R-2, had been obtained from Chinese troops who had attacked the Kalmucks.

These two maps are the oldest known maps of Central Asia of Mongol origin. R-1 extends from the city of Samarkand on the west to Khami on the east; from the southern borders of Khotan northwards to the river Irtysh. In other words, from longitude 70° to 91° East, and latitude 39° to 50° North.

R-2 stretches from Turfan on the west to the river Tula in the east; from lake Koko Nor on the south to the river Kemchik in the north; longitude 79° to 107° East, and latitude 37° to 51° North. R-2 is particularly interesting because it shows a considerably greater amount of geographical knowledge than possessed by contemporary European authors.

This volume contains altogether 28 articles describing early maps of North America, Europe, North Asia, and in one case North Africa, which is of interest in view of the Portuguese decree of 1504 "forbidding any private person to produce or own any maps or globes representing the lands situated beyond the Congo" (page 67). There is an interesting note on early watermarks and another on the length of the league, or Portolan mile, of Mediterranean charts. The twelve books reviewed were published in America, Italy, Israel, Holland, and Japan. The chronicle of map sales and exhibitions covers Austria, England, Germany, Italy, Sweden, U.S.A., U.S.S.R., and Venezuela. The bibliography notices 150 books or articles published during 1954, amongst which we notice an article by V. S. Agarwala on Ancient Indian Geography, appearing in the *Bulletin of the National Geographical Society of India*, published at Banaras.

Imago Mundi is of so very great interest that it would be of great help if the Editor could provide a subject index to every five or ten volumes. The Editor would, I am sure, rejoice to receive descriptions and photographs of any map or portion of map of India or South Asia earlier than the 18th century.

A few hours spent browsing through this magnificent volume will prove richly rewarding to any student of either geography or history, and show how immensely these two branches of science can be illuminated by a study of Maps.

R. H. PHILLIMORE

The Bombay Dockyard and the Wadia Master Builders by Ruttonjee Ardeshir Wadia (Bombay, 1955; pp. 401+xx; Price Rs. 22.50 in India and Rs. 25 abroad).

It is a fascinating but authoritative study of the growth and development of the Bombay Dockyard written round the activities of the Wadia family who under the leadership and inspiration of the first "Black" Master Builder, Lowjee Nusserwanjee Wadia, played a notable part in the construction of ships for the English East India Company as also for the British Royal Navy at Bombay. What might have been a chronicle of dry details, collected from various sources, including the published and unpublished records in the Bombay Secretariat, the National Archives of India, and

the Commonwealth Relations Office in London, has really been transformed into a romance by reference to the role of the founder and other members* of the family in the changing fortunes of the Bombay Dockyard and, for the matter of that, in the history of ship-building in modern India.

The book is divided into two parts. The seven chapters of Part I deal with the history and the acquisition of Bombay by Britain, Indian shipping and ship-building, the Indian Navy, the docks and ship-building in Surat, and the development and administration of the dockyard at Bombay. The author has quoted the prophecy attributed to the Portuguese Viceroy Antonio de Mello de Castro, "I foresee that India will be lost the same day on which the English nation is settled in Bombay", and has shown how the possession of Bombay enabled the British to develop their naval strength and spread their empire in South Eastern Asia.

The main interest of the book, however, centres round the contributions of Lowjee Nusserwanjee Wadia, and of his descendants, to the building up of the British shipping in Bombay which are dealt with in Part II. Of particular importance to the East India Company were the services of Jamsetji Bomanjee Wadia. Death only separated him from the Bombay Dockyard which he helped to develop with great zeal and devotion during his connection with it extending over a period of 50 years. He raised the reputation of the family to its zenith during the 29 years he served as the Master Builder.

From 1736 right up to 1857 the post of the Master Builder in Bombay Dockyard had been held by the members of the Lowjee family. The son succeeded the father not so much by hereditary right as by virtue of merit and approved ability which enabled them to maintain the progressive trend throughout these long years. With the disappearance of the East India Company, the activities of the Bombay Dockyard were much reduced and ultimately, on 30 April 1863, the Indian Navy ceased to exist. The post of the Master Builder of Bombay Dockyard was abolished.

Let it not be supposed that the family of Lowjee has been always in affluent circumstances. Like the "Black Zamindar" of the East India Company in Calcutta, the "Black Master Carpenter" of the Company in Bombay received a very poor salary in relation to the responsibility of his position. In view of the meritorious services Lowjee and his two sons had rendered not only to the Government of the Company and to the British Navy but also to all private shipping, their salaries were increased in 1764. Lowjee was henceforth to get Rs. 50 and his two sons Maneckjee and Bomanjee, who also later rose to be Joint Master Builders, were to get Rs. 30 and Rs. 25 per month respectively. The Company of course rewarded them for specially meritorious works by the presentation of *shawls*, silver rules and medals on which the names of the recipients were inscribed.

The introduction of steam for propelling vessels through water and the use of iron for building ships changed the whole character of the art of

ship-building, and the old practices of the Bombay Dockyard had naturally to be modified. But the Lowjee family may well be proud of their achievements in ship-building.

Like the famous muslin cloth of Bengal, whose superiority led the English manufacturers of cloth to carry on an agitation to shut out the Bengal cloth from the English market, the ships made in Bombay had to face a tumultuous agitation from the ship-builders of London. Books on the impolicy of employing India-built ships in the trade of the East India Company were presented to Members of Parliament. But the vessels built at Bombay by the Parsi Master Builders, whether for the Navy or for private owners, could hold their own by the superior quality of their construction and by their durability and fitness for service under all conditions.

Among the many interesting episodes narrated in the book is the competition between the mighty oak of Britain and the fine teak-wood of the Malabar forests of India as to which was the more suitable material for the building of ships. The story of the "Trincomalee", renamed the "Foudroyant", the oldest ship in the world, "still afloat and still in active use", made in Bombay and launched in October 1817 has been a challenge of the enduring Indian teak to the glories of the British oak.

The book is profusely illustrated. There are 58 photographs, besides a useful map. One would very much wish that such a book would be free from printing mistakes. Unfortunately some have crept in. But Mr. R. A. Wadia has rendered a distinct service by bringing out a book which bears ample evidence of his painstaking research and is a valuable contribution to the history of ship-building in Bombay and in India.

SUKUMAR BHATTACHARYA

Maharaja Ranjit Singh by Sita Ram Kohli (Allahabad, 1956, pp. 210; price Rs. 6.50).

In this nicely balanced and well-documented study of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (in Hindi) the learned author—Principal Sita Ram Kohli—tells us almost everything worth telling—the evolution of Sikh fraternity under the hegemony of the first five Gurus known as "Deg ke dhane" (the heroes of spirituality); the first great Sikh transformation from a religious fraternity into a militant sect—first defensive and later aggressive—under the hegemony of the last five Gurus known as "Deg aur Teg ke dhane" (the heroes of spirituality and sword); the political condition of the Punjab before the debut of Ranjit Singh; his accession to the *Gaddi* of the Sukherchakian Misl; his early life; his marriage and its political significance; his rise to power, conquests and domination in the Punjab; the second great Sikh transformation into a well-knit political entity under the Maharaja's leadership; his foreign relations and policy towards the neighbouring independent states, notably towards the East India Company; his system of administration with reference to his fiscal policy, treasury and military machine; and also his religion and his

attitude to religions other than his own. The book has 19 chapters and in addition there are six Appendices throwing light upon his *Durbar* and *Durbars*, his European officers—their names and salaries; his family and the like. It is gratifying to learn that the author has thrown in his critical observations here and there, and in doing so he has taken into consideration the views of the other authors on the subject, directly or indirectly. He has also thrown welcome light on some most striking features of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's life and administration.

This does not, however, mean that everything is perfect. One criticism that can be directed against the author is his silence on some important aspects of the Maharaja's governance and policy, notably his North-West Frontier Policy and administration; the evolutionary career of the Sikh military system and machine since the days of Guru Har Gobind Singh; a general survey of his civil administration including judicial system. The legacy of the Sikhs has not received at the hands of the author the attention it really deserves.

Another criticism against the author is that the arrangement of the subject-matter of the book leaves much to be desired. A good deal of the subject-matter of Chapters XVII and XVIII could have been more suitably embodied in earlier chapters. It would be, in my view, much better to divide the account of the Maharaja's government into two parts *viz.*, "Efficient Parts" and "Dignified Parts" and to describe these separately and a little more comprehensively and critically.

The language of the book is simple, the flow is spontaneous and the subject has been presented in an interesting manner. Mistakes of language are conspicuous by their absence but the general get-up of the book leaves much to be desired and mis-prints are many.

From this brief and general survey of the various aspects of the Maharaja's career, private and public, and of some of his institutions covered by this study, it is obvious that the author has the gift of going straight to the core of the subject and presenting essentials as a welcome and interesting whole, leaving out the non-essentials. The book has supplied the much-felt need of the Hindi-reading public and is easily one of the best books on the subject. I am, however, not quite sure if it could be very suitable as a text-book but it would undoubtedly be a desirable addition to every library.

GANPAT RAI

The Public Records of Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1923 (Cape Town, 1956, pp. xxxviii + 282).

The Central African Archives has brought out a useful guide to the Public Records of Southern Rhodesia which makes known for the first time the records pertaining to the years 1890-1923—the period of Southern Rhodesian history when the country was administered by the British South African Company.

The constitutional history of Southern Rhodesia may be said to commence with the signing of the Moffat Treaty in February 1888 by the British Government on the one hand and Lobengula, the permanent Chief of the Matabele nation, on the other. Rhodes' dream of bringing these parts of South Africa under the hegemony of the British became a reality when the British South Africa Company was incorporated on 29 October 1889 with the sole purpose of establishing European rule and economic enterprise in these backward regions. The political history of Southern Rhodesia follows the usual well-defined pattern under the aegis of the Company, culminating in the grant of responsible government to Southern Rhodesia. The colony was formally annexed to the British Crown under the new constitution of 1 October 1923.

It is the voluminous collections of records of this period, namely the administration of the British South Africa Company, that form the subject-matter of this guide. After a brief but adequate introduction describing the skeleton structure of the Company's administrative machinery, the author V. W. Hiller, who is also the Chief Archivist of the Federation of Rhodesia, surveys the records, giving the necessary details, and adds historical notes on the various departments and offices which came into being from time to time. An outstanding feature of this guide is its carefully chosen illustrations which bring to life the significant land-marks in Rhodesian history.

This idea of bringing out a records guide referring to a particular period of history is worthy of note. It serves to focus attention on the wealth of material available on a certain topic in an archival repository.

DHAN KESWANI

THE INDIAN ARCHIVES

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PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES: A NEW FEATURE OF THE ARCHIVAL SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES

On July 6, 1957, the Harry S. Truman Library at Independence, Missouri was dedicated and became a part of the archival system of the United States. Carved in stone at the right of the main entrance to this splendid structure appear these words:

This Library will belong to the people of the United States. My papers will be the property of the people and be accessible to them. And this is as it should be. The papers of the Presidents are among the most valuable sources of material for history. They ought to be preserved and they ought to be used. Harry S. Truman.

In placing this inscription on the building erected through the generosity of his friends and associates and given to the Government as a depository to house his papers and other historical materials, President Truman was not unmindful of the fact that the papers of Presidents had not always been thus preserved and made available to the people as a part of the archives of the Nation.

For 166 years there was no systematic provision made for the preservation of papers of the Presidents. Consequently many were lost, dispersed, or destroyed. Others were preserved, often by mere happenstance, and some, although preserved virtually intact, were long not available for research use. Yet almost from the birth of the Republic it was recognized that Presidential papers formed a vitally important and valuable part of the historical and cultural heritage of the American people. Why then, were they not systematically preserved from the outset as a part of the Nation's archives? The answer lies chiefly in the nature of the Presidential office itself.

In the United States, the office of the President, like the offices of members of the Congress and the Supreme Court, is a constitutional office having a separate and independent status in the governmental system. Every President since George

Washington has considered that this separate and independent status extends to and embraces the papers of the incumbent of the office. Thus, as is the case with the papers of the individual members of the Congress, the papers of the Presidents have always been considered their personal property, both during and after their incumbency. This principle has the sanction of law and custom and has never been authoritatively challenged.

And so it happened that the Presidents from Washington on took their papers with them when they left office. When Presidents died in office, their heirs or executors took over their papers. The history of the fate of the papers of each of the Presidents—the damage they suffered through loss, mutilation, and dispersion before finally coming to rest in the public depositories where most of what remains are now to be found—is too long for inclusion in this paper. The details—all of them not entirely creditable either to the Nation or to the heirs of the Presidents—are summarized, however, in an article by Buford Rowland in the July 1950 issue of the *American Archivist*. But it should be noted here that the Congress, recognizing that the Government and the people had a vital interest in Presidential papers, appropriated considerable sums of money during the early 19th century to purchase the paper of Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe from their heirs. These papers eventually were deposited in the Library of Congress which, since 1903, has acquired by gift and purchase substantial quantities of the papers of 19 Presidents from Van Buren to Coolidge.

Up to a generation ago it was usually physically possible for a President to pack up his papers and take them home with him at the end of his period of office. Though the papers tended to increase in volume, taking care of them privately was still within the range of possibility. The papers of Abraham Lincoln, for example, even when individually mounted and bound as they now are in the Library of Congress, comprised only 194 volumes for the whole period 1833-65.

In the last 25 or 30 years, however, a radically new factor has been introduced into this situation—a sudden and tremendous increase in the rate of creation of Presidential papers, resulting in the swift accumulation in the White House office of bodies of files so enormous that no private person can undertake to give proper care and housing to the collection. For example, President Hoover's papers filled a substantial portion of the available space in the Hoover Library at Stanford

University in California; the papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt occupied some 500 five-drawer file cabinets; and those of President Truman were only slightly less in volume. And, besides such vast quantities of papers, recent Presidents have accumulated thousands of printed items—a library in effect—and countless gifts and mementos, many of which are of great cultural and commemorative value.

It is no accident, therefore, that Presidents Hoover, Roosevelt, and Truman established libraries to care for their papers, books, and mementos. They really had no choice in the matter, for the problems that confronted them with respect to the housing of their holdings was one of an entirely different order of magnitude than those with which earlier Presidents had to deal. Not only was the day past when a President or his family could even contemplate taking charge of and caring for the papers and other historical materials until such time as they felt ready to place them in a public institution—there was no existing public institution equipped to keep the collections intact and administer them as an integrated body of source materials essential to the understanding of the President and the period in which he lived.

As indicated above, President Hoover placed his papers, books, and mementos in the library which bears his name at Stanford University where, although they do not belong to the Government, they are carefully preserved. In time they will be freely accessible for research. It was President Roosevelt, however, who broke fully with tradition and proposed, during his lifetime, to give his papers, books, and mementos to the Government. In 1939 the Congress by joint resolution established the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, New York, and placed it under the administration of the Archivist of the United States. Thus the Roosevelt materials, together with a library building erected through the generosity of his friends and associates, were given to the Government and became a part of the national archives system. The Roosevelt Library has more than lived up to the highest expectations of those who were responsible for its establishment. Today the Roosevelt papers and those of his associates and contemporaries held by the Library constitute one of the richest and most heavily used collections of manuscript source materials in existence relating to the history of the United States for the period 1933-45.

The legislation establishing the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library applied to that institution only. When President Truman

indicated that he proposed to follow the Roosevelt precedent with respect to his papers, books, and mementos, the need for general legislation establishing a system for preserving Presidential papers became more apparent than ever. Recognizing this need, the Congress passed, with bipartisan support and without dissenting vote, the Presidential Libraries Act of 1955.

In passing the Presidential Libraries Act, the Congress, in effect, subscribed to the principle that, although Presidential papers are the property of the Presidents, they constitute a class of property that is affected with the public interest ; that they are as important in character as if they were, in fact, Federal archives ; and that the Federal Government has a special responsibility and interest in seeing them properly preserved, protected, and, under proper policies, made available for research. It therefore sought in the new legislation to provide a system for preserving Presidential papers which, at one and the same time, respects the constitutional rights of the President ; serves his convenience with respect to the disposition and use of his papers ; permits his friends and associates to erect a building in his honour to house them ; satisfies the interests of the Government ; and meets the requirements of scholars.

The Presidential Libraries Act authorizes the Administrator of General Services, who heads the administration of which the National Archives and Records Service is a part, to accept for and in the name of the United States :

“ Any land, building, and equipment offered as a gift to the United States for the purposes of creating a Presidential archival depository, and to take title to such land, buildings and equipment on behalf of the United States, and to maintain, operate, and protect them as part of the national archives system.”

It further authorizes him to accept for deposit therein :

“ the papers and other historical materials of any President or former President of the United States, or of any official or former official of the Government, and other papers relating to and contemporary with any President or former President of the United States, subject to restrictions agreeable to the Administrator as to their use.”

It also authorizes him to deposit in any Presidential Library “ any Federal records appropriate for preservation therein ” and in addition, to accept :

“ gifts or bequests of money or other property for the purposes of maintaining, operating, protecting, or improving

any Presidential depository [and to] charge and collect reasonable fees for the privilege of visiting and viewing any exhibit rooms or museum space in any such Presidential archival depository."

Finally, it authorizes him to provide "reasonable office space in any Presidential archival depository for the personal use of any President or former President of the United States."

It will be noted that the Act does not require a President to give his papers to the Government. The decision as to their disposition still rests, as it always has, with the President. But now he can plan for their disposition with the knowledge that the Government has made legal provision to receive them in the archives of the Republic. The Act offers him a method of disposing of them in the public interest. It assures him that they will be preserved intact in a place of his own choosing and conveniently accessible to him; that they will be kept in official custody, properly arranged and described, and preserved under the supervision of professional archivists; that their integrity as evidence of his administration will not be impaired; that the confidential character some of them have will, so long as necessary, be respected; and that in due course and under proper policies all of them will be made available to the people for research use.

Thus far no President has asked the Congress to appropriate money for the purchase of lands on which to build a Presidential Library or for constructing and equipping such a building. The existing libraries were made possible through the generosity of the friends and associates of Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, and the Eisenhower Foundation is now raising funds for a proposed Eisenhower Library at Abilene, Kansas. Certainly a President's friends and associates could erect no better memorial—no more lasting tribute—to him than a Presidential Library. The Act wisely permits the Government to take advantage of the memorial interest of these friends and associates and enables it to acquire at no cost to the Nation's taxpayers not only the Presidential papers themselves but also the expensive facilities and equipment to house them.

But Presidential Libraries are not mere memorials to individual Presidents. Rather, they are designed to serve as important cultural centres, as living institutions dedicated to research and to the preservation in professional hands of the documentary and related sources of important segments of the

Nation's history. They benefit citizens in all parts of the country. They establish important collections of manuscript sources outside the Nation's capital, thereby giving local scholars easier access to them and stimulating interest in American history and government. They enable scholars to get a well-rounded understanding of the Presidents and their times by making available in specialized institutions located in the communities where the Presidents spent their formative years, not only the papers of Presidents, but also the books they read and collected, the recordings of their speeches, the motion and still pictures of the events in which they participated, the materials they assembled in pursuit of their hobbies, and the gifts they received. They attract donations of papers from many important associates and contemporaries of Presidents, thereby enhancing the research value of the Presidential materials and, at the same time, creating collections of manuscript materials relating to clearly defined periods of American history. Indeed, this concentration of research materials enables each Presidential Library to build up and hold a professional staff especially trained in the history of a particular period and thus to become of more than ordinary usefulness to scholars and writers working in that period. And finally, Presidential Libraries contribute importantly to the educational and cultural development of the general public through the maintenance of modern museum and exhibit rooms which are visited annually by hundreds of thousands of Americans, young and old.

The administration of Presidential Libraries by the National Archives and Records Service of the General Services Administration ensures effective continuity, common planning, and useful interrelationships between them and the national archives system as a whole. It brings to the preservation, classification, and arrangement of Presidential and related papers all of the technical and professional experience accumulated by the National Archives since its establishment in 1934. It makes certain the opening up of a large proportion of a President's papers for research use under proper policies within a relatively short time after the close of his administration. And it enables scholars at one library to have easy access to materials in another library and to importantly related Government records in the National Archives and in the several Federal Records Centres through microfilming and correspondence.

WAYNE C. GROVER

ORGANIZING ARCHIVES IN BULGARIA

Until a few years ago there was no central organization to collect archives in Bulgaria. Attempts to do so were made more than once in the eighty years since the liberation of Bulgaria from Turkish oppression in 1878, but they bore no fruit. The National Library in Sofia played the part of state archives, and was bound by law to take in and preserve all state, public and private archives. Archives were also collected by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Holy Synod, the provincial libraries, library clubs, museums and certain cultural institutes.

Naturally there could be no question of up-to-date organization of archives in Bulgaria under these circumstances. It was limited to collecting materials for archives, and arranging them in a certain order with a view to their being used by a limited circle of scholars and scientists. In the period under discussion more was done to publish archive materials, chiefly the private papers of famous men of the 19th century renaissance in the country, and papers concerning the national revolutionary struggles of the Bulgarian people.

The country's general advance along the road of socialistic pattern of life in the past ten years has given an impetus to the collection and preservation of archives. The question of centralizing this work came to the fore once again. At the time, Bulgaria had no trained staff of archive workers, but there were people who thoroughly grasped the importance of documentary material for historical research, and the necessity of a special institute which would take over the entire care of such papers and documents. After studying the experience of foreign countries for several years, with the collaboration of men who had worked in this field up to then—professors and cultural workers—mainly from among the circles of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the State Library in Sofia, the work of the central organization in collecting archives of the country was begun in 1951. A decree issued by the Presidium of the National Assembly founded the State Archives. This includes "all documentary materials of political, scientific and practical importance, no matter of what period, origin, content, technique and manner of reproduction they may be". The systematic accumulation of documentary material from state and public institutions and from private persons forms the sum total of archives in Bulgaria.

By virtue of this decree the newly-formed State Archives is under the Head Office of Archives at the Ministry of the Interior. This Head Office was later turned into a Department of State Archives at the same Ministry. The decree provides for the setting up of central, urban and district archives in Sofia, and one office of Archives in each district centre of the country. By virtue of the decree three State Archives Offices have been functioning in the country for the last six years—the Central State Historical Archives (CSHA), the Central State Archives of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the Sofia Urban District State Archives (SUDSA). They have at their disposal a special staff of scientific and technical collaborators. There are also 12 District State Archives in the country, whose task is to collect, preserve, and catalogue the documentary materials in the districts and prepare them for scientific and practical reference.

The decree founding the State Archives provides for the complete centralization of the work on archives. This puts an end to the scattered nature of the work hitherto, the incompetent and arbitrary collecting and preserving of archives on the part of different institutions (libraries, museums, library clubs, monasteries, etc.). The only exception made is for the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the decree stating expressly: "The documentary materials of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, concerning the activity of the Academy and its members, are to be handed over to the Academy". In 1947 an Archives Section was formed at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, which was turned into an Institute of Archives in 1949. Up to the setting up of the State Archives, this Institute collected all kinds of documentary materials for the history of the Bulgarian people. The publication of the decree limited its scope and today, alongside with its scientific work, it collects and scientifically studies only the collections of archives of the Academy Institutes, members of the Academy and the former Bulgarian Society of Letters (which became the Academy of Sciences in 1911).

The Party archives, now at the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, do not enter this united collection of archives.

The decree publishes lists in detail of all the state and public offices and organs, as well as private persons, who have collected documentary materials, and which constitute the archival wealth of the State Archives.

The newly organized State Archives has launched a planned and systematic drive for unearthing, collecting and preserving of all state, public and private archives.

Their second main task is to find suitable places for housing the materials collected and to secure the conditions necessary for preserving them. Steps are now being taken to construct special archives buildings which will meet the requirements of modern preservation techniques.

In a period of five years (1952-56) over 2,300 collections of archives have been accessioned. This number is constantly growing. To serve scientific and practical ends, the material collected has to be studied and made accessible for research. Certain achievements in this field may be stressed. The *Bulletin of State Archives* published in 1957, records that 25 per cent of all the archives collected have been scientifically and technically studied, and can be used for research work.

Together with this activity, the State Archives gives methodological guidance to all the offices, enterprises and organizations in the country. These are preliminary measures to prepare the documentary materials before they are put away in the State Archives. In 1952, *Model Regulations* were published on the basis of which the offices, enterprises and organisations issued their own regulations with definite indications and tasks, according to local conditions. These *Regulations* indicate the manner of selecting materials of value from current papers, and when and how to hand them over to the State Archives, as well as the order to be observed in destroying unnecessary papers.

To further the end of improving organisation in the office archives, and giving them assistance in their work, the Department of State Archives at the Ministry of the Interior published in 1950 an *Instruction on Organizing and Examining the Archives of Offices, Organizations and Enterprises*. Special lists of documentary materials in current papers were also prepared.

For the training of archive cadres, a new faculty of Archives was instituted at the State University of Sofia in 1952.

Today, as in the past, several archival publications are issued. The Department of State Archives at the Ministry of the Interior publishes its own organ, *Bulletin of the State Archives*. The purpose of this *Bulletin* is "to assist scientific workers—historians, economists, linguists, scholars as well as cultural and public workers, writers, journalists, propagandists and so on, in their scientific and practical work". Articles in the field of the theory and practice of archives administration are published in this *Bulletin*. It also includes individual

documents and articles which are of assistance to Archive Institutes in organizing the work with documents and achieving similarity of methods.

In the same year the Central State Historical Archives in Sofia published a guide on how to work with the materials prepared so far. These editions were preceded by Vol. 1 of the *Bulletin of the Institute of Archives* at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, in which materials taken from the archives of the Academy were chiefly published.

The fact that Bulgaria was invited officially to the Congress of Archives in Florence in 1956, as well as to the celebration of the 2nd centenary of the foundation of the State Archives in Budapest, gives hope that this country will soon be able to take its place in the international circle of archivists.

PETER MIATEV

RECORDS RELATING TO INDIA IN SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

Since the establishment of the Penal Colony of New South Wales in 1788, there has always been a connection between the British Antipodes and India, though, admittedly, the connection has often been slight. In the earliest days of the British settlement in Australia, India figures only as a cause of considerable trouble and bickering between the early colonists and the authorities in London, for in the first years of Australia's existence as a British possession, the matter of the monopoly of the Honourable East India Company created difficulties. Almost the first signs of independent action on the part of free colonists in Australia was their commencing of a trade with Indian ports, using small ships to bring back the vital necessity, food, to the struggling and at times famine-stricken colony at Port Jackson. Even this slight infringement on the monopoly of the Honourable Company, commenced as it was to save the Colony from extinction, stirred up the anger of the powerful Board in London, which jealously regarded its monopolistic privileges.

In a slightly later era, the now more firmly established Colony was ruled by governors with some experience of Indian conditions and by the 1830s and 1840s the question of migration of Indian labourers was a contentious one in the Colony.

The city of Sydney is not rich in deposits of historical material relating to India but the activities related above have caused the accumulation of some material in the Archives of New South Wales and in other repositories in the State. At present, the Archives of the State of New South Wales are considered as a department of the Public Library of New South Wales, and the Mitchell Library, another branch of the Public Library, contains some interesting material relating to India. The letter-books of early governors contain references to the matter of Indian trade and to the prohibitions against migration into India of ex-convicts from the Australian Penal Colony.* Governor King's letter-book for the year 1797-1806 contains a copy of an interesting letter from Governor King to Joseph Foveaux, Acting Lieutenant Governor, dated 14 November 1801, concerning the East India Company's opposition to the landing of ex-convicts in India. The Governor's despatches, especially during the time of the governorship of Sir Thomas Brisbane (1820-25) contain many illuminating references to the participation of army

* See also *Fort William India House Correspondence*, Vol. XIII, p. 433.

officers in India in speculations in New South Wales. The correspondence of the years 1822-23 with the Secretary of the Indian Government's Military Department, is particularly illuminating on this matter. The Governor's despatches for the 1840s contain many references to customs duties on goods imported from India. Throughout the whole early colonial period, the matter of the monopoly, of infringements, and of the difficulties attending trade between Australia and India, appear to have caused considerable difficulty to the Colonial administration.

The papers of Sir Joseph Banks are one of the most important collections held by the Mitchell Library. Banks, President of the Royal Society, was one of the first to put forward a project for a settlement in Australia, and because of the scientific circle in which he moved in England, the collection contains some items of Indian interest, including a letter from Earl Moira to Banks, dated 3 November 1815, with reference to the opening up of a new way through the Himalayas from India into Tartary. The private papers of Governor Macquarie, who served in India before taking up his appointment as Governor of New South Wales in 1809, contain papers relating to Macquarie's army career, including some material dating from the 1780s when Macquarie served with the Bombay Army.

Unfortunately, the mercantile activities of early Sydney merchants like Robert Campbell, Simeon Lord and others are not recorded in collections of papers which have come down to the present day. Some of Campbell's ledgers exist but none relate to his overseas trade activities. In the case of Lord and others, the only material extant today regarding them is contained in the records of the Colonial administration. For the latter period of Indian trade, however, there is more material, and the papers of Captain Robert Towns, which have not yet been sorted and arranged, contain many references to his early voyages to India and the trade which he opened up. Towns exported considerable numbers of horses to India in the 1850s and 1860s though his connection with India began in 1842 soon after he had established a mercantile and shipping business at Sydney. Towns was one of the prominent Australians who wished to sponsor the immigration of labourers from India during the 1840s. By the 1830s the trade connection with India had become stronger and from this period the Mitchell Library holds the memorandum book of J. Janssen, covering the period 1807-49 and giving a description of conditions at Calcutta between March 1832 and March 1837. The memorandum book is

accompanied by an interesting album of water-colour sketches by Janssen. These show costumes, buildings and scenery in and around Calcutta during the period. The Mitchell Library also holds a number of sketch books whose authorship is unknown, containing coloured sketches illustrative of life in India in the 1830s and Lady Dowling's manuscript memoirs, giving an account of social life in India in the 1840s.

The proposal to introduce Indian labourers into Australia in the 1840s, strongly supported among the landholding squatters of the period, has resulted in the presence of some material relating to India in several of the collections of private papers held in the Mitchell Library. Draft petitions and letters relating to the formation of the Association for Obtaining Permission to bring in Labourers from India give a picture of this interesting movement. The papers of Dr. James Mitchell, of Edward Deas Thomson, and other collections include material of this kind, and the Governors' despatches for the 1840s especially those of Governor Gipps, contain material on the question.

By the late 1840s the subject of communications between England and Australia excited considerable interest in colonial circles. In the papers of Sir Thomas Mitchell are items relating to the problem of communications between Britain and India. The vulnerability of the old land route across the Isthmus and Suez was stressed by Mitchell and at the same period a movement was begun in the Colony of New South Wales to promote the establishment of the India and Australia Steam Packet Company as a competitor to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The large and important collection of papers of John Dunmore Lang in the Mitchell Library contain material on this movement. Another collection in the Mitchell Library containing material of Indian interest for the period is the Crooke Papers which contain a section relating to conditions among Indian labourers employed in Australia in the early 1850s. This collection is still in private hands but the Mitchell Library holds photoprints of the manuscripts. There is very little material in the Archives of the Government of New South Wales relating to India after the beginning of Responsible Government in the Colony in 1856. The Colonial Secretary's papers for the 1870s contain correspondence with the Indian authorities on scientific matters such as the supplying of silkworms and plants which the Colonial Government intended to introduce into Australia.

Apart from the material in the Mitchell Library there are some business records in existence in Sydney which have a

bearing on the trade between the two countries. The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company extended its routes to Australia in 1852 and the records of the Company in Australia for the latter half of the nineteenth century are held in Sydney, though as with so many other deposits of business records, they have not yet been thoroughly examined. The Company also holds the records of its subsidiary, the Eastern and Australian Steamship Company, which relate to the sea traffic between India and Australia in the early part of this century. The records of the Colonial Sugar Company, held at its Head Office in Sydney, contain material on the Company's holdings in the Fiji Islands with material on the introduction of Indian labour in which the sugar industry in the Islands in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Company's Archives have been surveyed recently and are sorted and arranged. The quantity of material is considerable.

In the Archives of the University of Sydney, there is an account by Lieutenant Clifford Meham of the siege of Lucknow. Meham served with the Madras Army for several years before the outbreak of 1857. He survived the siege and took part in the military operations that followed it. This interesting account, running into over forty pages of closely written manuscript, only came to light two years ago in the University. It was apparently presented some twenty years ago to the University by one of Meham's descendants. On his return from India, Meham published several volumes of sketches which he had made during the siege and during his subsequent campaign, but the existence of this long manuscript was unknown to the India Office Library in London.

The proposal to introduce Indian labour in the 1840s was apparently the point at which the Australian Colony became most closely involved with Indian affairs and this is naturally the subject on which there is most material relating to India in Sydney. In the course of the surveys which the Business Archives Council of Australia will be conducting in the next few years, it is likely that further business records will come to light relating to trade relations between the two countries. This short survey, it is hoped, will indicate, however, some of the more interesting and important material that is held in Sydney today.

NATURE AND SCOPE OF CHOTA NAGPUR COMMISSIONER'S PRE-1859 RECORDS

The records under review throw valuable light on the administrative history of the Division: that is, on the gradual adjustment of the simple but inflammable people of these tracts to the new exigencies of foreign rule, as also on their rapid socio-economic transition. An attempt has been made in the second part of this note to survey the administrative developments as revealed through records with special reference to the growth of the agencies that created these records.

Apart from their administrative interest, these records are also of considerable importance from the points of view of tribal research and sociological study. "Chota Nagpur presents not only villages in which the old institutions of the country are in various stages of decay", observed Rakhal Das Halder, a Deputy Collector on settlement duty in 1880, "but also villages in which the commune system has been kept in tolerable vigour." In fact the old institutions of the tribal people were still vigorously alive when British rule was being effectively established in these tracts, and some of the pioneer British officers such as Roughsedge and Cuthbert, Wilkinson and Dent, Davidson and Tickell, Ricketts and Dalton have left in their writings¹ living accounts of what they found as traces of old communal life—a valuable source material for the history of human race which all ages and people will relish.

These records are also of considerable political interest in so far as the large tracts of country now included in this Division formed in the early British period the south-west frontiers of the Bengal Presidency, and flanked as it was by the powerful Maratha Kingdom of Nagpur 'from the southern extremity of Panchet to the banks of the Sone', the security of this region featured most prominently in the evolution of East India Company's political relationship with the Nagpur Court. The occupation of Chota Nagpur in the early seventies of the 18th century

¹ The best known published works are E. T. Dalton's *Ethnology of Bengal* and Col. Tickell's paper entitled *Hodesum* (improperly called *Kolehan*) published in the Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1840. Hunter's *Statistical Accounts of Bengal* and O'Malley's *District Gazetteers* also contain valuable information. Among unpublished reports the best known are Roughsedge's, dated 2 April 1821; Dr. Davidson's, dated 29 August 1839; Col. Tickell's, dated 1 February 1842; and Dr. Hayes's, dated 22 February 1867.

seems to have been effected on the consideration that 'this country would form a barrier against the incursions of the Marathas and give command of the passes into the Deccan'.² A British unit known as Ramgarh force was stationed at Hazaribagh with this end in view, and the officer commanding this army was charged with assisting the civil authorities in maintaining law and order in these jungle tracts as well as guarding the frontiers against the inroads of the Marathas.³ Under the vigorous foreign policy of rulers like Wellesley and Moira, the function of this officer tended to change into one of active interference in the affairs of the neighbouring kingdoms on some pretext or other, for which the two Maratha wars, the operations against the Pindaris and the frequent internal disorders in the border principalities provided suitable opportunities. On the cession of the Saugor and Nerbudda territories in 1817, under which the Sumbhulpur, Patna and Surguja groups of states were occupied by the Ramgarh force, the political functions of its commanding officer grew to such a volume that in 1819 he was allowed to assume the designation of Political Agent to the Government on the South-West Frontier, and the superintendence of the three groups of states was placed in his charge.⁴ In 1833 the administration of the whole Chota Nagpur region was entrusted to the care of the officer holding this post and in 1854 he was designated Commissioner, Chota Nagpur Division. Nonetheless he continued to supervise the administration of the tributary states of Gurjat Mehals as the ceded territories were called, till these were eventually transferred to the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Cuttack and Chutteesgurrh Agent, to whom most of the records connected with these territories were also transferred. Among other records of political nature some of Captain Roughsedge's letters connected with the Anglo-Nepalese war are interesting. Roughsedge had personally led six companies of Ramgarh force against the Gurkhas in 1814-15, and these letters are those written or received by him during that campaign.

The most interesting records of political nature are those bearing on the revolt of 1857-59. During this period, it is significant, nearly all the civil and military stations in the Division

² J. Reid, *Final Report on Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Ranchi* (1912), p. 15.

³ Letter dated 16 July 1803, from Chief Secretary J. Lumsden to Major E. S. Broughton, commanding Ramgarh Battalion.

⁴ Letter dated 10 January 1819 from Chief Secretary to E. Roughsedge, commanding Ramgarh Battalion.

were abandoned by the officials, and British rule for a time almost disappeared from Chota Nagpur. Though the officials could reoccupy their stations shortly afterwards, in some parts of the Division, such as Singhbhum and Palamau, British authority could be re-established only after long and protracted fighting. Authentic accounts of this revolt in Chota Nagpur have already been published, and hence it is unnecessary to detail them here.

Lastly, the Chota Nagpur records are also important from the point of view of economic history. Forming as these regions do the richest and most potential mineral as well as industrial belt of India, a study of industrial progress in these areas—the opening of mines and quarries, the establishment of factories and workshops, the development of roads and railways, the influx of European capital and the Christian missionaries, the opening of schools and colleges, and the formation of a rapidly growing industrial population—is in itself a matter of sufficient historical interest to attract the notice of all serious students of modern Indian history.

The old records of Chota Nagpur Commissioner were “partially destroyed” during the Mutiny,^a and those which remained are contained in nearly 200 volumes of English correspondence which, without going into their detailed classification, may roughly be divided as follows:

- (1) Ramgarh Collector's correspondence (1798-1833);
- (2) Military and Political correspondence of the Officer Commanding Ramgarh Battalion, who from 1819 assumed the title of Political Agent as well (1795-1833);
- (3) Correspondence of the Governor-General's Agent, South-West Frontier, which from 1854 merges into the correspondence of the Commissioner of Chota Nagpur Division (1833-58).

II

Under the Mughal^a Government, the territories not included in Chota Nagpur Division formed half explored parts of Subah Bihar and were divided into a number of semi-independent zamindari states, the chiefs of which were the Rajas of Chota

^a Letter dated 3 October 1857 from E. T. Dalton, Commissioner of Chota Nagpur, to Accountant, Government of Bengal.

^a A valuable account of Mughal invasions in these tracts may be found in Blochmann's *Notes from the Muhammadan Historians of Chutia Nagpur, Panchet and Palamau* published in the *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XL, Part I, 1871.

Nagpur, Ramgarh, Kharakdiha, Palamau, Panchet and Singhbhum,⁷ with a train of feudatories attached to each of them. Nominally, these territories passed under British rule in 1765, but the different zamindars could not be subdued till many years later. The opportunity was provided by invitations from certain dissatisfied claimants to some of these jungle zamindaris, and under orders of the Patna Revenue Council, Captain Camac gradually effected their conquest.⁸ In 1771 Camac was made Military Collector of these tracts called Ragarh District which included Nagpur (Ranchi), Palamau and Chakye (now in Monghyr) as well as the present district of Hazaribagh with his headquarters at Chatra.

The British control over the conquered parts of the Division was, however, only partial and ineffective. Those of the zamindars who had been subdued were made to pay a fixed *jumma*, which, too, they do not appear to have regularly paid. All other administrative responsibilities, including police and criminal justice, were left in the hands of the zamindars. A *muchelka* or security bond was taken from each of them, in accordance with the previous practice, binding themselves to maintain order in their districts, to guard the roads and passes, and to catch and punish the offenders against public peace. More than three-fourth of the country was governed through the military collectorship of Ramgarh, and the rest was within the jurisdiction of the Jungle Terrai, Birbhum and Midnapur districts. In 1779, a *munsif* (native judge) was appointed at Chatra and in 1780 a regular *zilla* was formed for Ramgarh under a Judge-Collector; the unification of the two functions especially allowed here in view of its being a border district. The headquarters of the Ramgarh Battalion were later shifted to Hazaribagh.

At the time of forming Decennial Settlement of Bihar districts in 1789-90, special resolutions were passed in the case of these jungle zamindaris to which no specific promise was made, as to other Bihar zamindars, for declaring their settlement permanent if the Court of Directors approved.⁹ This point was, however,

⁷ Roughsedge describes the status of Singhbhum in his letter of 12 August 1818, as follows:

"The Rajah is said to be in possession of an Imperial (Mughal) sunnud which prohibits the officers of the Empire from taking revenue from, or exercising authority over Singhbhum, it is certain at least that the Mahrattas have never interfered in any manner with it, nor have its inhabitants since the establishment of the British Government in this part of the world been subject to any foreign dominion."

⁸ Reid, *op. cit.*

⁹ See John Shore's Minute on Bihar Settlement, dated 18 September 1789 (printed in Firminger's *Fifth Report*, Vol. II).

settled in 1799 when on a reference from the Collector of Ramgarh as to the desirability of a revised settlement in these tracts, the Board of Revenue ruled that the existing settlement might be regarded as fixed for ever as in the case of other zamindars. Another policy pursued in effecting revenue settlement in most of these estates was to make separate engagements with the subordinate fief-holders called *ghatwals*, thus weakening the powers of their overlords. Unaccustomed as they were to any regular and rigid forms of revenue payment, the results of the revenue regulations of Lord Cornwallis were ruinous to the Chota Nagpur zamindars. Panchet was sold for arrears of rent in 1795, and was purchased by a Calcutta banker. This led to an outbreak of worst commotion in the eastern parts of Chota Nagpur Division which has been described by the officials of the time as the dreaded *Chuari* against which the police of the state was powerless to act.

Our records of the series begin about the time when the whole of the Division was in the grip of worst crimes. Armed gangs of *Chuars* moved in different directions in the immediate vicinity of civil and military authorities and were led by powerful *ghatwal* chiefs often supported, or connived at, by the Rajas. Even the troops acting under Captain T. H. Welsh appear to have proved ineffective. Disorders soon spread to Birbhum, Patcoom and Tamar, in the former of which the management of the Court of Wards established under the Regulation of 1793 had proved particularly distasteful to the inhabitants. What is still more strange, the so-called gang appear to have enjoyed the support of the masses. A letter from Welsh to his Chief, Major Dyson Marshall, commanding Ramgarh Battalion, dated 15 September 1798, begins as follows:

“I have the honour to transmit for your information copies of *arjees* (1 to 11) from several *Zamindars* of Panchet, the whole of which serve to evince that the district is nearly in an open state of rebellion, that the *ryots* refuse to pay the revenue, and that some already have and others are about to join the *Chooars*.”

The confusion appears to have been all the more heightened by the renewal of the inroads of the Marathas who had forcibly seized the pargana of Barwa in Palamau and laid waste five other parganas of the Chota Nagpur Raj¹⁰. In 1799 Captain E. Roughsedge, who was destined later to play much greater roles in the annals of Chota Nagpur, was despatched with troops to suppress rebellions in the disturbed districts, and his letters to Major Dyson Marshall

¹⁰ Letter dated 17 April 1798 from W. Hunter, Magistrate of Ramgarh, to Sir A. Clarke, acting Governor General in Council.

throw abundant light on the state of law and order in those parts.

The correspondence of the period indicates that British control in these regions was most ineffective. The police and judicial regulations of 1793 had operated in these tracts only in name. Few Government *thannahs* appear to have been established in the interior, and the police responsibilities of the zamindars had been rendered abortive due to the prevailing uncertainty as to which parts of the 'regulations' were operative in these jungle regions. Up to 1799, the offices of the Judge-Magistrate and the Collector seem to have been united in the same person in Ramgarh unlike other Bengal districts where judicial and revenue functions had been separated under unequivocal orders of 1793. The two offices in this district were separated by a Government order, dated 2 May 1799, but the office of the Collector was very soon abolished and the revenue administration of the *zilla* was subject to the control of the Collector of Bihar,¹¹ whose jurisdiction now extended from the banks of the Ganges to the southern limits of the present Ranchi district, an area now governed by six Collectors. The Judge-Magistrate of Ramgarh was, however, continued, and he held his court alternately at Chatra and Sherghaty, the latter now in the district of Gaya. The only step taken for a more effective police administration in these disturbed districts was a reconfirmation of the police powers of the zamindars in the eastern parts of the Division, powers which were lately legalised by Regulation XVIII of 1805. Under this Regulation such parts of these territories where the crimes of *Chuar* had been most rampant were detached from Ramgarh, Birbhum and Midnapur districts and formed into a separate district under the name of 'Jungle Mahal'.

The area that remained under the Judge-Magistrate of Ramgarh continued to be in a disturbed condition. The reasons are not far to seek: there was no executive agency subject to the Magistrate to carry out his orders. The allegiance owed by the Raja of Chota Nagpur, whose estate extended to the whole of the present district of Ranchi and parts of Palamau, was very vague. He could never pay his revenue regularly.¹² He refused interviews with the British officials and was charged with neglecting the administration of justice and police, for which no remuneration or compensation was ever allowed to him. He did not

¹¹ Reid, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹² Up to 1799 a *Sazawal* appointed by the Collector but paid by the Raja was attached to the estate to realize Government revenue from certain portion of the harvest placed in his charge. When the practice was abandoned, the arrears began to accumulate.

recognise that his right to collect *sayer* was in any way infringed by the prohibitory regulation of 1793 and he resisted the imposition of excise duties by the Government. He failed to assist the Government troops marching under Colonel Jones in 1801-03 through his district, for which general *parwanas* had been issued by the Governor General.¹³ The attitude of the Raja is summed by Captain Roughsedge in his letter, dated 27 October 1806, as follows: "..... the slightest mark of loyalty to the Government shown by any individual in Chotanagpur at the present day is sufficient to bring down upon him the undisguised and serious displeasure of the Raja and his officers".

In 1807-08, disorders became acute owing to dissensions in the Chota Nagpur Raj family and Captain Roughsedge marched into the country to enforce the authority of the Government. The Raja paid up the arrears of revenue and agreed to introduce a system of police to be controlled by the Magistrate but paid by him. The police arrangements took effect from 4 June 1809. It was about this time that a separate revenue officer designated as Assistant Collector was again deputed to the Ramgarh district. The Raja's consent to these measures was reluctant and the correspondence of the period shows that he continued to be viewed with suspicion by the British authorities. In 1819, he was suspected of complicity in the murder of a woman who was supposed to have caused the death of his children by sorcery. Consequently, he was deprived of his police powers, disgraced and detained for a long time at Chatra. The police of the district was put under an Indian superintendent subject to the control of the Magistrate.¹⁴ The same year the Collectorship of Ramgarh was restored in view of the new fiscal problems arising out of the sale of Palamau and introduction of *abkari* revenue in Chota Nagpur.

The story of the Zamindar of Palamau is even more painful than that of the Panchet and Nagpur Zamindars. The Pargana had been settled with him (Churman Rai, son of Gopal Rai) by Collector Leslie in 1790. From this time he rendered all kinds of services required of him by the British Government. He attended upon and defrayed the expenses of Colonel Jones and his army which remained in his pargana for two years from 1801 to 1803 to suppress rebellion, and he guarded the passes under Governor-General's *parwana* of 26 August 1803. "In 1211 Fasli (1804) such

¹³ Dated 26 August 1803.

¹⁴ The arrangement was based on a plan suggested by Major Roughsedge in his letter, dated 18 February 1820, to A. J. Colvin, Magistrate of Ramgarh.

was the draught and scarcity in the Pergunnah my Zemindarry", runs a petition¹⁵ of the Raja, "that hundreds of inhabitants died and hundreds were sold for 4 to 2 annas". From the beginning of 1806, the police in the zamindari was entrusted to the Raja's charge which continued with him till 1812. But for none of the above services or calamities a pie was ever paid to him as remuneration nor a farthing was ever remitted from his annual *Jumma*. Yet when the estate fell in arrears of revenue it was immediately put on sale, purchased by the Government, and granted as reward to Raja Ghan Sham Singh of Deo in recognition of the long record of loyal services done by that family, especially during the expeditions against the Pindaris as well as Surguja and the neighbouring Maratha states in 1812-14. The grant of the pargana to an outside zamindar resulted in an outbreak of serious disturbances among the excitable *Cheros* and *Kharewars*, and in 1819 it was taken over by the Government under direct management. Among many documents bearing on Palamau two reports, one by C. Parry, Asstt. Collector of Ramgarh, dated 20 February 1812, and the other by S. T. Cuthbert, Collector of Ramgarh, dated 13 April 1827, are particularly interesting.

It was about this time that Singhbhum, hitherto independent and unexplored, was also brought under British control. Its necessity was emphasized on Lord Hastings by Major Roughsedge, the officer commanding Ramgarh force, in a few letters written from Sambhalpur where the latter had proceeded to occupy that district consequent to its cession by the Bhonslas. Roughsedge had already received overtures from the Raja of Singhbhum and his two relations, the Kharsawan and Seraikela Chiefs, whose estates had suffered the depredations of the Larka Kols. In his letter, dated 12 August 1818, to Chief Secretary John Adam, he describes the Larka Kols as a savage but manly race inhabiting "a mountaneous and woody tract of country 50 miles long and 30 miles broad extending from frontier of Tamar through Singhbhum towards the boundaries of Coonjur [Keonjhar in Orissa]". No traveller ever ventured to pass through their country. Even a body of 100 armed men could not be induced to go straight from Seraikela to Bamanghaty which were then in a flourishing state. "The Chief advantages of establishing the British influence of control", observed Roughsedge in the same letter, "and doubtless the completion of our frontier and the connection of the province of Cuttack by a much nearer and more convenient route with Benaras, and the western portion

¹⁵ Enclosed with letter, dated 18 December 1814, from T. C. Robertson, Assistant Collector of Ramgarh, to Board of Revenue.

of the British Empire, a similar connection is also gained by it between Sumbhulpoor and Bengal, and very important security to the general police of the State will be obtained by shutting up to criminals the asylum, it has frequently afforded". Necessary order having been obtained from the Government, Roughsedge first concluded treaties with the Raja and his two relations granting them British protection in lieu of a nominal tribute, and then entered "Colehan", as the country was called, with strong military force. The Larkas fought most tenaciously, but at last their leaders, induced by a proclamation issued by Government on 29 April 1821, surrendered and entered into engagements binding themselves to subjection to British Government and agreeing to pay to their chiefs at the rate of 8 annas per plough. The country was placed under the political charge of Major Roughsedge. Among a number of despatches written by Roughsedge on the subject of Singhbhum, one of 2 April 1821, addressed to Lt. Col. Richards, furnishing a detailed topography of Singhbhum with special reference to the Larkas, and the other, dated 8 May 1821, to G. Swinton, Chief Secretary to Government, submitting a report on the final arrangements made with them, are particularly interesting.

The establishment of effective British control led to gradual introduction of rules and regulations of Bengal Code in Chota Nagpur tracts. Large bands of outsiders descended on the plateau as police *darogas*, court *amlas* and *abkari* farmers, who, being more astute than the simple aborigines, played upon them all kinds of tricks and defrauded them of their money and land. Even worse than these were the crowds of upcountry settlers who followed in their train. "These were Mussalmans, Sikhs, and some others who came to the country as horse dealers and shawl and brocade merchants, fetched enormous offers for their goods from the Nagbanshi Chiefs and obtained farms of villages instead of cash, of which the latter Chiefs were always in want".¹⁶ The people found themselves everywhere oppressed, and there was no chance of getting justice either from their own chiefs, who, deprived of their power and prestige, had naturally grown unmindful of the welfare of their people, or from the Government whose courts were too distant, their processes too cumbrous and their *amlas* too corrupt to prove useful to the simple *adivasis*. S. T. Cuthbert, Collector of Ramgarh, brought these widespread oppressions to the notice of Government in 1826 and 1827 without much effect. Commenting on the abuses prevailing in the

¹⁶ Government of Bengal, Revenue Department, Resolution dated 25 November 1880.

collection of excise duties on a country liquor called *haudea*, he wrote, for instance:

"The settlement with the *Thikadars* for 1233 F.S. has produced a revenue to Government amounting to 17,000 rupees, but it cannot be concealed that this additional Revenue (owing to the manner in which it has been collected) has been gained at the expense of the best interests of the *Pergunnahs*; for it has been proved beyond all contradictions, that for these last two years, the country has been a prey to the Tax gatherers in the shape of *Tickkadars* and *Katkindars* who have left no means untried to enrich themselves on the ruin of the people."¹⁷

The seething discontent burst out in the form of the Kol Revolt of 1831-32, which affected nearly the whole of the present Chota Nagpur Division. Valuable accounts of this movement have already come out in print. For graphic details, however, the military correspondence of the period and more especially the valuable reports written by Special Commissioners, Cuthbert and Wilkinson, dated 12 February and 6 April 1832¹⁸, and by Joint Commissioner, Dent, dated 16 November 1832, make most interesting reading.

The movement was suppressed with iron hands, but the lesson it gave appears to have impressed upon the Government the unsuitability of the general regulations to the primitive inhabitants of these parts of India.¹⁹ The result was the passing of Regulation XIII of 1833 under which Bentinck ordered the exclusion of these tracts from the operation of general regulations, and formed them into a non-regulation province, called the South-West Frontier Agency, which was to be administered by a Governor General's Agent. Under this Regulation, the old districts of Ramgarh and Jungle Mahal were vested in the Governor General's Agent.

By a Government letter, dated 9 December 1833, T. Wilkinson, the officer commanding Ramgarh Battalion, who had already acted as Special and Joint Commissioner for suppression of the movement, was appointed as the first Governor General's Agent. His pay was fixed at Rs. 3,600 per month and he was allowed four assistants. The assistants were to perform such duties as the Agent prescribed, and the Agent was to perform all duties

¹⁷ Letter, dated 28 July 1826, to the Board of Revenue, Central Province.

¹⁸ Original not available.

¹⁹ Letter, dated 3 June 1833, from C. Macsween, Secretary to Government, to Dent and Wilkinson, Joint Commissioners.

previously discharged by the Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit, the Civil and Sessions Judge, and the Board of Revenue. He was allowed to continue as Political Agent in respect of the Tributary States already under his charge, but was relieved of the command of Ramgarh Battalion which was entrusted to a separate officer. He was further required to shift his residence as well as the headquarters of the Ramgarh Battalion from Hazaribagh to further southward as nearly as possible in the centre of the recently disturbed areas. The site chosen in 1834 was a village named Kishunpur, situated in the heart of Chota Nagpur proper, which has since developed as the beautiful town of Ranchi, the summer capital of the Government of Bihar and till recently the headquarters of the Eastern Command of the Indian Army.

Wilkinson divided the de-regulationised tracts into three divisions, namely Lohardagga, Hazaribagh and Manbhum, and placed them each under an officer styled Principal Assistant to the Governor General's Agent. The fourth unit, Singhbhum, came into being in 1837, when owing to the prevailing unrest among the Larka Kols, Wilkinson separated their country from the authority of the Singhbhum chiefs and brought it under direct administration with a Senior Assistant Agent as its officer in-charge.

Wilkinson framed a set of rules for the administration of civil and criminal justice in the tracts placed under his control. The criminal rules were approved by Government²⁰ and remained in force till the introduction of Indian Penal Code in Chota Nagpur in 1860. Under these rules the assistants to the Agent were vested with the powers of magistrates in the Regulation districts with the exception that they could pass sentences up to seven years subject to the confirmation of the Agent. In the administration of civil justice, for which the final decision of Government was withheld pending the promulgation of a bill on the subject (which obviously could not be enacted till the passing of the Civil Procedure Code in 1859), the course adopted was to be guided by the spirit of the old regulations with such modifications as might prove necessary in the best interest of the governed. In 1842, the Agent was relieved of a part of his heavy judicial burdens by the appointment of a separate judicial officer called the Deputy Commissioner.

In regard to the police, the inclusion of the Jungle Mahals in 1833 brought with it the system of zamindari police already

²⁰ Vide Macsween's letter, dated 17 February 1834, to Wilkinson.

in vogue there under Regulation XVIII of 1805. This system was extended to the other zamindaris under the Agent's charge and practically became the general rule. Under it, every zamindar exercised the powers of a police *daroga* in his own estate, and controlled the *ghatwali* and rural police there. He had also to maintain a small police force paid by himself. Some of the zamindars were also empowered to try petty offences, but their powers were limited to the infliction of a fine limited to five rupees. The formation of a regular police constabulary in Chota Nagpur was first attempted by Dalton in 1858-59 but it was soon superseded by the extension of the Police Act of 1861 to Chota Nagpur under which the police administration of the whole of British India was eventually re-organised.

No further administration changes appear to have taken place during the period under review except the change in the designation of the Governor General's Agent to that of Commissioner, Chota Nagpur Division. This was done by Act XX of 1854 owing to the passing of these non-regulation districts from the hands of the Supreme Government to the hands of the new Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. By a further Notification, dated 30 April 1861, the title of Deputy Commissioner was changed as Judicial Commissioner and that of the Principal Assistant as Deputy Commissioner. The above forms still continue in Chota Nagpur.

ADITYA PRASAD JHA

**CORRESPONDENCE OF SIR WILLIAM RUMBOLD WITH
HENRY RUSSELL (7 DECEMBER 1823—30 JUNE 1833)***

(1) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Liverpool, 7 December 1823*

“My dear Russell,

We landed here the day before yesterday. I do not expect to get away till the 11th and then we must travel slow. I shall hire a Post Coach here if I can I have been five months getting here from Madras, so you may probably have later news. God grant it may be good. It is very important for your interests and mine that we should meet soon”

(2) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Thomas's Hotel, 22 December 1823*

“. . . I now send you the papers you wish. Pray return them. When I can collect myself for a few minutes, you shall hear what I learn. My friend Kinnaird who begs me not on any more interesting and important material that is held in Sydney of his Part. But I am very cautious in following your advice of keeping away from Directors just now”

(3) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Thomas's Hotel, 29 December 1823*

[Elphinstone has visited him.] “. . . Elphinstone asks what you are doing? He says you are *lost if you do not come forward*. For God sake come to town if only to speak to me, that we may see what can be done”

(4) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, Sutton Park, 7 January 1824*

“My dear Rumbold,

It is very inconvenient to me to leave home just now, but I will nevertheless make a point of seeing you to-morrow, Thursday I have great doubts of the expediency of your going before the Court, or adopting any other measure of that character. Even although you may succeed in the first instance your success

* This is the sixth instalment of the correspondence of Henry Russell. The earlier instalments appeared in *The Indian Archives*, Vol. VIII, Nos. 1, 2, Vol. IX, Nos. 1, 2 and Vol. X, Nos. 1-2.

will be only temporary ; eventually you will provoke a resistance, that in the end will prove too strong for you.

Believe me etc.

H. R."

(5) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Thomas's Hotel, Berkeley Square, 7 January 1824*

" I addressed the Chairman of the Directors this morning and told him that having understood reports were in circulation that the Firm, of which I am a member, had received corrupt Support, I begged to be allowed to produce documents to contradict such reports. I have had no answer, and I hear that they will not receive my communications. If so they may go to the Devil altogether. I want, however, very much to see you, that I may determine how to proceed. The Resident has asserted in plain terms that he is convinced you were a member. If so let them prove it, and I am perjured, for I have sworn you were not"

(6) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Thomas's Hotel, 12 January 1824*

" I have a Correspondence with the Court which I wish to shew you, and they agree to receive any communications I wish to make them, which is civil. I have a statement with Copies of original letters to send them, but I wish you to see it first"

(7) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, Sutton Park. 14 January 1824*

" If you wish me to see Your Statement before it goes into the Court, the only method will be for you to send it to me in a parcel by the coach from the George and Blue boar, Holborn ; and I will return it immediately. I have had some experience of the practice of the Court in matters of this kind, and have no hope of your deriving any benefit from such a course. I certainly shall not adopt it, in the present stage ; and, for the same reasons, I particularly wish that, whatever you may do on your own account, you will not enter upon the merits of my proceedings. The Govt. in India, it seems, want now to make out that the Sixty lac loan was not a bona fide transaction, but consisted entirely of a transfer of old balances. This notion, of course, You can refute ; but you will find, as I originally

foresaw, that this loan will prove the basis of all your evil. I only regret, for your sake as well as my own, that I allowed even Lord Hastings's desire to divert me from my first objection to it"

(8) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Thomas's Hotel,*
17 January 1824

" It would have been a great comfort to me to have been able to have your opinion of my Statement and papers before it went in, but I am sure there is nothing in it you could disapprove of. I do not pretend to advocate your cause, but I am compelled to do so in part, because I am obliged to justify an affidavit which Lord Hastings forced from me in India regarding you, and which the Government in India have attempted to represent as a false one. The affidavit is so simple and so plain that all those persons who have read it, and the Documents that lead to it are astonished at the attempt to attack it. It is drawn up and sworn to by Palmer and myself and states that you were never connected in any way with our Firm. A letter from Sir C. M. desires to know the period which it embraces. He is told in reply 'the whole period from the establishment of the House'. He asks the date of establishment and is told Feby. 1814. A most unjust and insidious attempt to insinuate away its truth, will destroy the poison of the attacks, and I believe do us all good, for there seems now but one opinion of the injustice and perfidy of the attempt. It is true that no positive charge was made against Lord Hastings, but the object has been to whisper away his character, and to make it appear that things were kept back, which could be brought forward. I have not attempted to refute anything about him, but the Private Correspondence I have produced, will have all the effect desired, and the evidence is conclusive. I shall send you a Copy of the Statement and papers tomorrow or next day. Palmer's letters to me contain nothing new, excepting a list of persecutions and annoyances. They have taken away his salary from the Government, because he would not say whether any persons were connected with him in business before our House was established. That he never will consent to tell them, so they may do as they like, and if they ruin us we cannot help it"

(9) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Thomas's Hotel*
23 January 1824

" The last attempt to involve you was that you might have received more than twelve per cent. Int. from us, which

they say the affidavit does not deny. I maintain it does, but Elphinstone was delighted when I told him I was ready to swear that you did not. They all allow that the attempt to insinuate you had participation with Palmer before our House was established is futile, and that his transactions at that time were all events of a very different Kind.

Elphinstone tells me I ought to have drawn out a Statement Shewing the former state of the Nizam's Govt., the State of credit, the difficulties he laboured under, the grounds for Supporting Chundoo Loll ; The power of the opposite party, and the danger of the Nizam's Government being involved in the Confederacy against us ; The Rate of Interest before Palmer's establishment, and have Shewn that the Nizam's Resources did not decline under Chundoo Loll owing to his dealings with us, that on the contrary our supplies first carried him through the war, and then enabled him to commence a reform. He says also that I ought to have Shewn what reductions in establishments were made at the time of the loan. Metcalfe States that *no reductions* were made and that you know that. I can only draw up such a paper through your assistance"

(10) *Enclosed in (No. 9) : Sir William Rumbold to the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Directors of the East India Company, London, 19 January 1824*

"Honourable Sirs :

In laying the accompanying documents before your Honourable Court, in conformity with the consent you were pleased to give to my application, begging permission to do so, I trust I shall be pardoned if I take the liberty of offering a few observations relating to those documents ; and, in so doing, I am compelled to advert to the political state and public credit of the Nizam's country, for many years before the establishment of the house of William Palmer and Co.

The house of William Palmer and Co. acted under the impression, that the decided and public support given by the British Government to Chundoo Loll, had arisen out of the knowledge which the British Government possessed, that a very powerful party, to which the Nizam himself was supposed to lean, existed in his Highness's Court opposed to the British interests, and hence the firm concluded that any assistance rendered to Chundoo Loll for the support of his Government, would be looked upon favourably by the British Government.

At the period when the house became involved in pecuniary transactions with the Minister, the credit of the Nizam's Government was very low, and the Ministers assignments upon his collectors were discounted in the bazars at a discount of three and four per cent. per month. The house, in lending him money upon much more favourable terms, supposed that its transactions were beneficial to his Government. At this time it never entered into the contemplation of the firm, that their accounts with the Minister would be subjected to an audit by the British Government. It was supposed that the Minister's satisfaction with the terms of their engagements was sufficient, and therefore all charges to him were consolidated under the head of interest, by which the adjustment of accounts with him was much Simplified. Had the house anticipated a re-audit of its accounts, the charges for expenses and commission would have been made separately, and the interest would not have then appeared so high.

In support of this, I beg to submit that the usual charge of British houses of agency at the Presidency of one per cent. commission upon one side of an account current, amounts frequently to three or four per cent. upon the amount of the balance.

But the accounts were kept only for the information of Rajah Chundoo Loll ; and the firm having received the sanction of the British Government to their dealings with the Minister, supposed that he was equally competent to make his bargains with them and with the native bankers, and they always believed that when he resorted to the house in preference to natives for accommodation, he did so because he found the terms of such accommodations from it more advantageous to him, than those he could make elsewhere. I beg to submit to your consideration, that during the Residency of Mr. Russell, all the transactions of the Minister with the house were upon the security of the Minister only and that the Resident had required from the firm an acknowledgement in writing, that they understood themselves to have no other security than that of the Nizam's Government, and no right to expect from the Resident any further assistance for the recovery of their debts, than such as he could give them by his influence over the Minister, without involving the British Government in any discussions with the Nizam's Government on the Subject.

In estimating the terms of the advances made by the house, it is hoped that the nature of the security will be taken into consideration: and I am sure, I am justified in saying, that no

natives would have lent money so cheap upon such security as the house held.

In confirmation of this, I beg to state that the native bankers at Hyderabad refused to take half the amount of the loan upon the terms of the agreement with the Minister, and only agreed to lend money for the purpose of the loan to the house upon its security, taking from it, at first sixteen, and afterwards eighteen and twenty-four per cent. for these advances, and compelling the house to pay them the same rates for all their previous advances. These facts are so notorious at Hyderabad, that I am convinced their accuracy will not be disputed.

I further submit for your consideration, that at the period of the great advances made by the house to the Nizam's Government, the interest of money in Calcutta was never less than twelve per cent.: that during that time the Company's Government had opened a loan, giving ten per cent. interest for a year, and that the rates of exchange at which money was received for that loan at different treasuries, and other advantages given to the lenders, afforded them a bonus of six or seven per cent. upon the money lent.

If such was the value of money in those times in Calcutta (and it may be easily ascertained by a reference to the houses of agency in London) among merchants living under the protection of a British court of justice, and when they had ample security for all money transactions, your Honourable Court can thence form a just conception of the rate at which individuals at Hyderabad were likely to borrow, when the lenders were aware of the hazardous speculation in which the borrowers had embarked.

I have understood that the present Resident at Hyderabad, at the commencement of last year, urged thereto by the distresses of the regular and reformed troops of his Highness, was induced to borrow money at Hyderabad through the First Assistant at the Residency; and that, upon the ample security of the British Residency, he could only obtain two lacs of rupees at twelve per cent. This fact I have only learnt from private letters to me: your Honourable Court may have information on the subject. If the fact be correctly stated, I venture to hope that it may be considered as highly in favour of the transactions of the house, for at the period above alluded to, the houses of agency in Calcutta would not receive money at higher rate of interest than five per cent., and refused to receive large sums even upon those terms.

I beg to submit to your Honourable Court, that the large debt to the house originated in the advances made to the Minister for the maintenance and equipment of troops during Lord Hastings' campaigns. That in making those advances, the firm was fully aware of the depth of the speculation into which they entered. They saw, on one hand, the imminent risk to which they were exposed of losing the whole, for they were aware that the spirit of resistance to the British Government, which manifested itself in all Central India, was fully as strong at Hyderabad as in the other native Courts. Had Chundoo Loll been murdered by the opposite party, or had he been dismissed by their intrigues, or had his pecuniary resources failed, they were convinced that the Nizam's Government would have joined the confederacy against the British Government. On the other hand, they had full confidence in the firmness of the British Resident, and in the zeal and fidelity of Rajah Chundoo Loll. They were aware of the vast importance which must be attached by the Company's Government to the active co-operation of the Nizam's and of the alarming consequences of his defection, and they imagined that, if the capital and credit of the house could be made essentially useful to the Nizam, they should render a public Service, which could not be overlooked by either Government. The firm saw the defection of other native Courts in succession with dismay, and could not but dread that the Hyderabad State would be involved in the general wreck ; but it nevertheless continued its assistance, and the Nizam's Government stood firm to the end.

I venture to solicit your Honourable Court to refer to the despatches of your Residents for years previous to these campaigns, relative to the state of the credit and finances of the Nizam's Government, and to consider the extent of the military aid which he did furnish to the British Government : and if that aid was greater than might have been expected from his resources, I trust it will appear that he must have received great and unexpected assistance, and that the house of William Palmer and Co. may hope for some consideration for having furnished it.

The Resident and the Minister have frequently acknowledged the great public services rendered by the house at the above times ; and we always hoped that the Governor General would feel disposed to look favourably upon an establishment, which had asserted claims to his protection upon their joint testimony.

I humbly submit,*therefore, that if these high authorities appear to have shewn peculiar consideration for the house, the causes of this consideration may be readily accounted for, as proceeding from motives creditable to our establishment: and I hope and trust, that if it does not seem expedient that our house should be allowed to continue its transactions with the Nizam's Government, the liberality and justice of your Honourable Court will induce it to look favourably upon the house in the adjustment of its claims, and that it may not lose the benefit of the countenance of the British Government, in prosecuting its commercial and other banking transactions at Hyderabad, etc.

(signed) Wm. Rumbold."

[Sir W. Rumbold's Statement and the documents referred to in the above letter are printed in *Papers Relative to Certain Pecuniary Transactions of Messrs. William Palmer & Co. with the Government of the Nizam* (1824) pp. 727-731.]

(11) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, Sutton Park,*
27 January 1824

"My dear Rumbold,

I return your papers, which I have read with attention and interest. Your letter to the Chairman, in particular, I think it done with great force and ability. It does not appear to me that there is anything in it which could have been altered for the better. In the Statement which accompanied it, there are some passages, which if I had had the opportunity, I should have been glad to talk over with you, before it went in

The consent of Govt. to sanction the original establishment of the house at Hyderabad was first procured by John Palmer's personal influence; and, when the official application was afterwards sent through me, I recommended it in the following terms, in a dispatch to Adam of the 6th April 1814. 'The establishment of a commercial firm at Hyderabad, framed upon the principles, and conducted with the spirit, of an English house of business, will, I have no doubt, prove a source of general convenience and benefit.' In Adam's answer, dated 22 April 1814, I was empowered 'to afford the House every proper degree of countenance, and to recommend it to the favorable consideration of the Nizam's Govt.' I do not, however, recollect a single transaction, in which the House required any assistance from me,

or in which I supported its concerns with Chundoo Loll or any other person. It is amazing to see, after the terms on which Palmer and I were with one another, and the constant complaints made by him of my hostility and counteraction, that I am now charged with having given him a corrupt support, and having acted under the influence of a secret understanding with the House.

I have always maintained, and always will maintain, that the Aurungabad arrangement, not only was a public benefit to our interests as well as the Nizam's, but that, at the time it was made, it afforded the only means by which the Berar troops could be kept in a condition to take part in the war The sixty lac loan, you know, was a measure to which I always objected, I had no share whatever in the formation or advancement of the project, and you would have been spared all the embarrassment in which you are now involved, if I had preserved in resisting its completion. There could be no doubt that the money, if applied by the Minister as he promised to apply it, would be productive of great utility in assisting the measures of retrenchment and reform; and if the House were willing to make the loan, I was ready, on that ground, to give them all the support which my instructions authorised. But coupled as the scheme was with the proposal for the sanction of our Govt. I did not think it would be adopted in Calcutta; and I was sure it would meet with serious opposition at home. For this reason it was that I declined forwarding the Minister's application, until I saw it was Lord Hastings' desire that I should do so. It was for his Lordship, and not for me, to determine whether he would or would not give the sanction which was required of him; and it would have been a breach of my duty to withhold a set of official papers, which the Governor General desired I would lay before him. With the terms or details of the loan, further than they appear in the public correspondence, or indeed with the terms or details of any of the transactions of the House, I have, to this day, no acquaintance. A complaint has been made, either that I did not examine into the particulars of these transactions, or that, if I did, I neglected to report the result of my examination. When the draft of the proposed memorial from the House to Govt. was shewn to me in 1816, I objected to one of the paragraphs, inserted by Lord Hastings, of which the purport was that the Resident should be empowered to exercise this very scrutiny; my objection being founded on the consideration, that it would be impracticable for the Resident to look with effect

into the details of transactions so numerous and complicated as those of the House with the Minister, and that it would therefore be unjust to impose on him a responsibility of which he never could discharge the duties. I always thought that the Minister was the person most interested as well as most competent to watch over his own concerns, and that he might safely be trusted to make his own bargains for himself.

Anything like a full and intelligible statement on the various points suggested to you by Mr. Elphinstone would comprehend a history of the Nizam's Govt. and affairs for years past, and would be both a voluminous and laborious work. My predecessor Sydenham, in his last despatch before he quitted the Residency, stated that the disorders of the Hyderabad Govt. were too extensive and inveterate to be corrected by any measure short of placing the administration of the whole country in the hands of the Resident; and that it was to be regretted therefore, that the only remedy should be of a character totally at variance with our views and policy. Statements to the same effect continually recur in my correspondence with the Govt.; and a stronger picture of the evils of the whole system could hardly have been drawn than is exhibited in two papers which I prepared for Lord Hastings, in 1815 and 1816, on the general character and condition of the Nizam's Govt. and resources, and in my despatches on reform written in 1820.

As to the state of the credit of the Govt. at Hyderabad, unless you say it had no credit at all, which would perhaps be nearer the truth, a stronger fact can hardly be advanced than that stated by you of the Minister's not being able to discount his assignments upon his collectors for less than 3 or 4 per cent. a month. Of all the securities in the market, those of the Govt. were the worst; and if it was necessary that Chundoo Loll should have money to pay the troops during the war, and to prosecute the measures of retrenchment afterwards, it is undeniably true that he could not have got it anywhere but from your House.

The original ground of our supporting Chundoo Loll was that, of all the candidates for office, we thought him the most strongly attached to ourselves. My predecessor, Sydenham, in his correspondence on the appointment of a successor to Meer Allum in 1809, stated it as his opinion, that that scheme of administration, which placed the largest share of power in the hands of Chundoo Loll, would be the best for our interests. The justness of this principle is best proved by the history of the subsequent fifteen years, and by a consideration of what would have been

the probable consequences to us, if any other individual had been Minister. Sydenham's opinion was adopted, and acted upon by Govt.; and when Mooneer ool Moolk was ostensibly appointed Minister, with Chundoo Loll as his deputy, he was required to execute a written engagement in the presence of the Nizam and Resident, declaring that he considered himself to be a nominal officer only, and that all the functions of Govt. were to be administered by Chundoo Loll. It may be said that Chundoo Loll has his defects. Where is the native of India who, measured by our scale, would not be found to have defects, and very grave ones too? The question is, not whether Chundoo Loll is the best Minister that could be desired, but whether he is the best that could be procured. If there be a man at Hyderabad likely to prove a better, I am sure I do not know him.

How Metcalfe can say that I knew no reductions were made by Chundoo Loll at the time of the loan, I cannot understand. On the 1st September 1820, I reported to Govt. that a reduction of useless establishments had been made, to the amount of between 22 and 23 lacs a year. I may have been deceived, but, unless I believed the fact, unquestionably, I should not have reported it; and my belief was confirmed by this, that not only the Minister assured me he had made the reductions, but that some of the parties on whom they fell complained loudly to me of the hardship they had suffered from them.

Believe me etc.

H. R."

(12) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, 17 February 1824*

"My dear Russell,

The Court of Directors are in a sad dilemma, and what they will do, I know not. They will have to say something in their justification in the next Court, and whether they will attack the House I know not. My friends want to dare them to bring forward any evidence against it. I confess I wish we could be left quiet. Kinnaird, however, has requested that you will come to town for a day to speak to him on the Subject, *and I entreat you to do so, and that immediately*. You may trust him *implicitly*, and he will be a staunch friend, but if you decline seeing him, it will give a bad impression. If we do not manage well now, we may all be in a scrape. So for God sake come and give us your advice and opinion.

Yours ever affectly.

W. Rumbold."

(13) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, 19 February 1824*

"My dear Rumbold,

If you had taken my advice originally, you would have abandoned your project of the loan; and if you take my advice now, you will do everything in your power to prevent any public discussion on the subject. For myself, my line was taken long ago. I avowed to my friends in the Direction the share which I had, from the beginning, in what passed at Hyderabad; and if I am attacked I am prepared to defend myself. Any information which you require, and which it may be in my power to afford, I shall be most happy to send you, but it would be very distressing to me to leave home just now, and I do not see what possible good I could do you, by assisting at your discussions. You know, even better than I do, the details of all that has occurred, and can describe to Mr. Kinnaird as accurately as I myself could, my views and Sentiments on every branch of the subject.

Believe me etc.

H. R."

(14) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, Sutton Park,
29 February 1824*

"My dear Rumbold,

I am sorry that poor old Chundoo Loll should, at this time of day, stand in need of any protection but that which his own claims ought to give him. He has stood faithfully by us, throughout the course of a long public life; and we ought not to abandon him, when he has grown old and infirm in the support of our interests. Sydenham, after much experience of his character and talents, pronounced that to be the best scheme of administration for us, which placed the largest share of power in Chundoo Loll's hands; and he has amply vindicated this opinion. Through the whole course of our connexion with the Nizam, Chundoo Loll has been the only Minister who, in the hour of need, stood manfully and zealously by us, and brought forward the resources of his Govt. with Vigor and effect. In our war with Tippoo in 1799, the Nizam did nothing. In 1803, he did all but turn against us, and Lord Wellesley hesitated whether he should not declare him a public enemy, and prosecute hostilities against him. How different was the conduct of Chundoo Loll.

In Lord Hastings's War with the Pindarries, when the feeling of all India was against us ; when the Paishwah and the Rajah of Nagpore openly attacked us, when Sindia was kept in check only by Lord Hastings's presence at the head of an Army ; and when all those, who called themselves our friends, thought that the moment was arrived for combining to overwhelm us ; what was the conduct of Chundoo Loll ? With the Nizam notoriously adverse to us, and hating Chundoo Loll for his adherence to our cause, with a rival instead of a colleague in Mooneer ool Moolk, and with a feeling of hostility universally prevalent against us, among all classes of his countrymen, did he shrink from the performance of any one promise or profession that he had ever made us ? He openly braved the hazard and obloquy of his measure. He not only preserved tranquillity at home, but he sent an efficient body of troops into the field ; and, for the first time in the history of our alliance with the Nizam, he furnished a corps in all respects qualified to act on the same footing with our own army. Could we have done without them ? If, instead of being with us, they had been against us ; if the Nizam's country and resources had been not only taken out of our scale, but thrown into that of the enemy, what would have been our condition ? But for his fidelity and exertions how could we have got through the War ? or how could we have ventured to engage in it ? The whole scheme and character of our operations depended upon the part that was taken by the Nizam's Govt. ; and it was solely and exclusively by the personal fidelity and exertions of Chundoo Loll, that we were enabled to accomplish, with ease, objects, which, without him, we could never have ventured to undertake. Yet is all this now to be forgotten ? and, after he has stood by us through all our difficulties and trials, are we to cast him off, when he can no longer be of use to us ? and to abandon him, in his age and infirmity, to the enmity of those, who hate him only because they consider him as our friend ? If he could have expected such treatment at our hands he would have been wise to provide for the extremity. Yet, such has been his disinterestedness, and so entirely has he applied his own income to the public purposes of his Govt., that, with the whole revenues of the country at his command, and with no habits of personal expense, I am satisfied that, if he were to die tomorrow, he would leave his family without a shilling for their support.

Believe me etc.

H. R."

(15) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Paris, 22 March 1824*

" You are aware that papers have been laid before the Atty. Genl. to ascertain whether a pretext could be discovered for prosecuting me. From what he told me before that, I do not believe that they can make anything of it, and Brougham was of the same opinion, but if they should be able to attack me upon a point of law, I do not think it would be wise to go to the expence of a defence. The injustice of the case would cry out, and they could not enforce penalties against me. I would not, however, remain in their power in England in such a case, and therefore I thought it prudent to fulfil my promise of coming to see my family here"

(16) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, Sutton Park,
10 November 1824*

"My dear Rumbold,

The practice of giving and receiving presents in India cannot be compared to any usage which prevails in European countries. Under the native Govts. of India, no intercourse, either of courtesy or business, takes place without the interchange of presents. All such presents consist of jewellery, shawls, or dresses. Jewellery is given in one or more pieces, called *rukkums*. Shawls are always worn in pairs, and are also given in pairs, except to persons of the lowest order, to whom single shawls are given. Dresses in presents are never made up; the materials only are given, disposed of in Trays, and consist of Brocades (*Kumkhab*), Muslins (*Selah*) and occasionally embroidered stuff and trimmings. An inferior, in his intercourse with his superiors, always receives, and is seldom called upon to give presents. Among persons of similar rank and station, the average of presents given and received will, in the long run, be nearly equal. But a superior receiving the visits, or employing the services, of his inferiors, is obliged to make presents upon all occasions, and seldom receives any. This is peculiarly the case in the official station of a Minister. Every person newly introduced, or nominated to an appointment, or receiving an honor; every public officer going to his station, or returning from it; every individual of any consideration, visiting the Minister, either from courtesy or on business, is entitled to a present. On every great festival, on the occasion of weddings, births, and birthdays, and on the various ceremonials connected with the religion or superstition of the country, presents are distributed by the Minister. Persons

announcing any good news, even servants bringing messages of mere compliment from individuals of rank, expect a present ; and the very lowest of them receives a shawl. It is difficult indeed to conceive an occasion, of however frequent occurrence, on which the Minister of a native Govt. is not called upon to make a present. The Nizam also gives similar presents to all those whose rank or station is sufficient to procure their admission to his presence. These presents are at once the token and measure of the distinction conferred by the prince or by his minister. Whenever talk of a gracious reception, or obliging expressions, the natives of India speak of the number of pieces of jewelry conferred upon them. A man who receives two *rukkums* is at once stamped as the superior of him who receives only one ; and he who has a dress added to his jewelry takes place of him who receives jewels alone. A similar difference in the presents given to the same person at different times, indicates his advancement or decline in rank. The presents that a man is to receive often form a subject of previous negotiation. It is not the value but the number that is considered : and on the same principle on which he requires to be met so many steps from the seat or from the door, he stipulates that he is to receive so many *Rukkums*. The number of *rukkums* varies with the rank of the party, from one to ten. All presents given by the Prince or his Minister are held to be on the public account, and are justly charged among the public expenses of the Govt. The presents therefore given by the Nizam, as well as those given by the Minister, are provided by the Minister, and necessarily form a very heavy item of the expenditure of his office. By those at all conversant with the usages of a native Indian Court, the purpose for which articles of jewelry are intended may be known by their value and designation, and even of Shawls and Brocades the same judgement may be formed by their value. The minister purchasing jewels or shawls or brocades for himself would of course purchase them of a description suited to his Station, and in a quantity adapted to the numbers of his family. Those purchased by him to be used as public presents are of course much less costly, and in much larger number. In the particular instance of Rajah Chundoo Loll, he is so remarkable in the plainness of his dress, and the simplicity of all his habits, that whatever jewels or other costly commodities he may have purchased, may safely be pronounced to have been purchased on the public account. I do not know how far you can say that presents of this kind come more peculiarly under the objects of the loan, at that particular time, than at any other ; but

unquestionably they constitute a public charge at all times. The Minister must have bought them somewhere or other, and it mattered no more to his Govt. whether he paid for them out of the loan, or from any other source, than whether he took the money out of his right hand pocket or out of his left.

Sudder means literally *the head* ; and thence the chief place, the seat of Supreme authority. I do not recollect its ever been used in the correspondence between me and the Minister ; and I was struck with the peculiarity of the term when I first saw it in Chundoo Loll's letter to Capt. Barnett. On the Bengal side of India, I believe it is a word much more in use than at Hyderabad. Probably therefore Sir C. Metcalfe may have been in the habit of using it in his correspondence with the Minister, who may have adopted it from him. Certainly, if the Minister had used it in a letter to me, or to one of my assistants, I should have understood it as applying to the Governor General in Council, and should have translated it so, or by the word 'Presidency'. In my correspondence with the Minister, either the Governor General was mentioned by those English words, written in the persian character ; or 'Calcutta' was used to designate the seat of Govt. During all the time I was at Hyderabad, the term invariably used by the Minister, to designate the Resident, both in conversation and in writing, was *Sahib i aleeshan*.

Believe me etc.

H. R."

(17) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, London,*
12 October 1825

" I have a very short letter from Wm. Palmer of the 29th April. He sends me a copy of the Memorial which the Trustees had sent to Lord Amherst in behalf of the creditors ; it is temperate and judicious, but contains nothing new, and merely asks for the permission to have intercourse with C. Loll, or that the Resident may be directed to collect the debts. Palmer says 'I have never seen such gross misrepresentations as have been employed to injure us. Much is related upon hearsay, with an affectation of candour without attaching much credit to it ; and whilst from the manner of the report, we have been precluded from vindicating ourselves by being kept in ignorance. it has gone on making impressions to our prejudice. I am really astonished that such things can have been so uttered. H. Russell's pamphlet is excellent. I wait anxiously accounts

from you to know what effect has been produced by it. The accounts [of the Firm] are before the world, and what has become of Sir C. M.'s insinuations? I conceive it was from these items, that the reports were abroad that Lady Hastings had received jewels to a large amount from Lady Rumbold. The agency of the one Lady for the other was a rather farcical contrivance.'

Pattison has a letter from Lord Amherst of the end of May, telling him that Sir A. Campbell had taken Prome, and that deputies had come in to treat for peace, and that the war would be immediately concluded. I much fear this will have the effect of putting off Lord A.'s recall. It ought not, for if they considered Lord A. incompetent, surely a victory gained by Sir A. C. does not make any alteration in the state of Lord A.'s intellect!"

(18) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, Sutton Park,
16 December 1825*

[This letter refers to the Draft Instructions permitting Lamb to return to Hyderabad]

"My dear Rumbold,

The instructions profess, in terms, to leave the house at entire liberty to recover the sums due to it by private individuals; but, in substance, they do no such thing. The debtors of the house were both able and willing to pay their debts; and, if they had been left to themselves, would unquestionably have done so. But the Resident was ordered to tell them that the interest charged was illegal, and that the obligations were consequently void; and anybody who is acquainted with the natives of India cannot doubt, that what took place on that occasion impressed them with a belief, that it was the wish of the British Govt. that they should withhold payment of what they owed to the House. Merely to prohibit the Resident from future opposition, is not, therefore, to leave the House at liberty. The restraints which have been already imposed must be withdrawn; the erroneous impressions which have been given must be removed; and the House must be restored to the footing on which it stood, relatively to its debtors before the forcible interference of the Resident took place. If this is not substantially and effectively done, the House is as much precluded from the

recovery of its claims on individuals, as if the instructions conveyed a positive prohibition.

— The judgment declared by the Court respecting the public debt due by the Nizam's Govt. must be founded on a determination to fix the interest of the loan at 18 per cent., and to reject the allowances of Mr. Palmer and his family. Upon what principle can 18 per cent. be assumed as the interest, which the loan was to bear? No such agreement ever took place between the Minister and the House. The House never could have made such an agreement. If it had, it would have agreed to lend the money to the Nizam's Govt. at a lower rate than it paid for it to other people. The House never professed to State the terms of the loan; and the Govt. not only did not call for them, but determined, after much deliberation, that they would not call for them. The repaying the House now, at the rate of 18 per cent. would not be giving it a saving rate. Setting aside all other considerations, which every House making such a contract is entitled to plead, 18 per cent. would not cover the actual outlay made by it in raising the money. I would not, I think, urge the argument that the House were bound to give information as to the *nature* and *object* of their transactions. Whether those words do or do not comprehend the *terms*, the distinction at least looks like verbal refinement. As to the allowances, the House can no more be made liable for them, than for any other payment made by them on the Minister's order. Those allowances were voluntarily granted by the Nizam's Minister, in the exercise of what he considered to be his unquestionable privilege, and without any reference whatever to the existence of the House. Mr. Palmer's own allowances were granted to him several years before he entered into business; they had been enjoyed by him with the knowledge of three successive Residents; he could have no reason to suppose that they were in any respect objectionable; and, if the House could have supposed that they ever would be objected to, they would, of course, have adopted the obvious precaution, of refusing to pay the Minister's order on account of them. The House, as an establishment, derived no benefit whatever from those allowances. If the British Govt. thought it right to interfere for such a purpose, it might unquestionably have required the Minister to discontinue Mr. Palmer's allowances; but the deducting them retrospectively from the claims of the House, is, in fact, to compel the constituents to repay the Nizam's Minister the amount of allowances which were voluntarily granted by his predecessor, which he never expressed any

wish to annul, and for which the House were no more responsible than they were for the Minister's application of any other sums paid by them or his order.

The provision respecting *Tunkhas* seems to have arisen from a wish to prevent any anticipation of the revenue, and any interference, on the part of the House, in the internal concerns of the Country. A very erroneous notion seems to prevail respecting the nature and effect of a *Tunkha*. A *Tunkha* is, in fact, not an anticipation of the revenue. Though it is granted before the revenue is due, it is not paid until after the revenue has been realized. It is an order on the Collector of a certain district, to pay a certain sum of money out of the revenues of that district, when he shall have received them ; and, until the revenue has been received, the *Tunkha* is not due. The Minister, therefore, who grants a *Tunkha*, no more anticipates the revenue of the Govt., than a landlord in England would anticipate his income, who should grant a bill on his steward, payable the 31st of March, out of the rents to be received by him at Lady day. The same description of a *Tunkha* shews that the holder of it cannot derive any power of interference in the concerns of the Country. He has nothing to say to the collection of the revenue. His business is with the Collector only ; and his right to payment does not begin, until the duty of the Collector, in realizing the revenue of his district, has been completed. A *Tunkha* is, in fact, a bill of exchange drawn on the Collector of a district, and the holder of it has no more to do with the Collection of the revenue of that district, than the holder of a bill of exchange has with the transactions of the Firm by which his bill is payable ; there being, however, in the comparison, this disadvantage against the *Tunkha*, that, whereas the acceptor of a bill of exchange becomes personally liable for the amount, a collector is not liable for the amount of a *Tunkha*. accepted by him, further than the revenue actually received by him will enable him to meet it. The *Tunkhas* granted to the House may, if such a provision be thought necessary, be deposited with the Resident, who may be required to see that the House is prevented from any possibility of interfering in the concerns of the Country on that or any other pretence ; but, as *Tunkhas* are the mode of payment exclusively adopted under all native Indian Govts., the precluding the House from receiving a *Tunkha*, is precluding it from receiving anything. The *Tunkhas* will not, for that reason, be the less granted. The only difference will be, that, instead of being granted to the House, they will be granted to

somebody else ; and the House will be invariably anticipated in the satisfaction of its claims, of whatever validity, or covered by whatever security, they may be. You must take care that your arguments do not differ from those of the dissents.

Believe me etc.

H. R."

(19) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, 14 June 1826*

" I have no late letters from India, except a few lines from which I send you a most interesting extract— 'Your voluminous and interesting papers by the Java under cover of your letter of the 6th July have been forwarded to Hydd after perusal. I am astonished at your exertion and in admiration of your talent and judgment. and even without your after information by the steamer of August I should have been assured of your success. But you will have learnt that Mr. Martin is almost anticipating you. Whether the reversion to Henry Russell's system is the exclusive result of his own conviction, or combined with Instructions from Home ; or with his private information of the Bd. of Control's feelings I am unable to learn. He is competent and resolute enough of himself to decide upon great changes, but it is not likely that he would bring the Phalanx here upon his shoulders unless some significant hint encouraged him'"

(20) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Pulteney Hotel, 29 January 1827*

" I have no late letters from India, except a few lines from John Palmer, saying that Lamb was with him, and would proceed in a short time to Hyderabad. That beast Barnett is dead. I am sorry to say that Martin was likely to succeed Sir C. M. at Delhee, and we may not get so good a man in his place"

(21) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Grillon Hotel, Albémarle St., 24 October 1827*

" Lord Wm [Bentinck] had desired me to mark the Hyderabad Papers for him, that he may read what I consider most important. I am employed in it ; and an anxious to make references in the margin wherever Sir C. Metcalfe's assertions are inconsistent with others of his own fabrication, and to put

any little notes to most important parts It would be most important that if ever he does open the book, he should find the antidote against the poison”

(22) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, 30 November 1827*

“ I had a letter from Lamb yesterday in *very low spirits* of the 7th July. He says Martin appears to be less friendly, from fear of Metcalfe and has done some injurious things to them. He tells me also that it is reported, *I know not upon what authority*, that I ‘have given over attempting to do anything for the House, and attend exclusively to my own affairs!’ He further says that there is a disposition still to think me *rich!* and that ‘a foolish remark of Mrs. Russell in a letter to Mrs. Doveton that I was living at great expence in one of the most fashionable and extravagant hotels in London has the effect of confirming the belief’ . . .”

(23) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold, Swallofield,
2 December 1827*

“ I feel much more concern at what you tell me in the other part of your letter Lamb’s gloomy views I hope will be dispelled by what he will have heard of Lord William’s disposition; but the injustice which has been done to you is abominable. In all my letters and conversations, I have borne testimony, in much stronger terms than I have ever used to you, to the ability and perseverance of your exertions . . . I have little doubt that the dry fact to which Lamb alludes was mentioned by Mrs. Russell; but I have no doubt at all that the application which has been made of it is the work of other hands I will ask her about it when I am in Town I am going to write to Doveton; and seeing the occasion there is for it, I will take care to tell him what I think and feel upon the subject”

(24) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, St. George’s Hotel,
Albermarle Street, 11 March 1828*

“ The despatch passed the Court without any alteration (as it came from Mr. Wynn) excepting that the Court put out the expression that they quite agreed with the judges. Lord Melville made another slight alteration, viz. The Court meant to send out the last opinion of the law officers, with Bosanquet’s which argued against them. Lord Melville would

not allow them to go, because he said no doubt should be thrown upon the subject”

(25) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, 8 April 1828*

[Has obtained permission to return to India]

(26) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, London, 15 June 1828*

“ I leave town tomorrow at twelve. I cannot go without telling you myself that Lord Melville has been firm. He has sent to the Court an extract of the Act of Parliament by which they are obliged to forward a despatch from the Board in a given number of days, and has insisted upon its going in the first ship. His letter to the Court, contains, I understand, animadversions upon their letter to him, and states that the Restrictions which went out with Lamb, were in his opinion, unjust, and the conduct about the opinion of the Judges very reprehensible. Thus the Court have pledged him deeper than ever, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that he will never allow them to renew their hostility”

(27) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Calcutta, 18 November 1828*

“ We arrived here after a very tedious passage on the 7th. We are living with John Palmer. Lord and Lady Wm. have received us with marked kindness and attention, and there is a cordiality about them both which promises well. All the members of the family could not but take their clue from them, but I must say that I have found in my old friend Caldwell, who is aide de camp, and right hand man, a steady, zealous, and useful ally. He is much gratified at the manner in which the great people have repeatedly mentioned me, and at the distinct declaration made by Lord Wm. that it was his wish to mark to me all the attention in his power. From all I can gather he is not yet in the power of any man or men, and no person seems to know who is likely to enjoy his confidence. He says little in Council, and I understand all hands except that he will act upon what he thinks right without being betrayed into arguments either verbally or on paper. Sir C. M. is here, so is Bayley, Lord C. I am sorry to say, is up the country, and not likely to return till June. Bayley is said to be weak and timid, and much led by M. Sir C. M. is silent, at present, at least I have not heard him quoted for any opinions. I have not met him yet.

Mr. Swinton I met once at dinner at the Govt. House, and of course cut him dead The despatch which Lord Melville wrote is not yet arrived, but as Lord Wm. is going away to visit Aracan, and perhaps Penang, and will be away six weeks, I told him I wished for an audience on business, and he gave me up a morning by appointment. I was much gratified at what passed. I stated that I should not have sought to talk business till the arrival of the despatch, (of which I had previously apprised him of the contents) were it not that he was going away, and that the despatch might arrive in his absence, and I said I was in doubt whether to address the Govt. for leave to go to Hyderabad before his departure. He said that if the despatch came before he went he would immediately give the necessary instructions, but that if it did not he would desire Mr. Bayley to let the consideration of it stand over till his return—and he advised me strongly not to have any official correspondence with the Govt. till its arrival He said he was much surprised at the Despatch of Feby. 23d. (the one sent out by Lindsay) which he had received. Nothing he said could be more favorable for me, and that he was astonished the Court should have been made to acknowledge so much. That he had quite made up his mind as to the course he would pursue, viz., to see that any orders from home in our favor were fulfilled in the spirit in which they were written, and with the most liberal construction for us, and that no opposition should deter him from following that course. That it appeared to him from tenor of the orders he had received, and those that were coming about me, that my objects would be by that course and that I had only to fear evasions or delays, neither of which he would suffer. He told me, that he had no hesitation in condemning the conduct of the late Govt. about the decision of the Judges, that we had suffered great injuries under that conduct, and that it could not but have impressed the people at Hyderabad with the notion that the Govt. were determined, right or wrong, to prevent our getting redress. He, however, assured me that he would do us substantial justice, and there was evidently friendly feeling and sincerity in the declaration. I showed him a Copy of the Resolutions of the Creditors in England, which he read with attention; said the Govt. could not object to the reopening of the House, and that the document was most honorable and flattering to me. I have not yet had any letters from Hyderabad, as they have not had time to hear of my arrival. Poor Lamb died there many months back, but I have no particulars about it. Wm. Palmer complains of the Minister, and

of Martin, who are very great friends. Since writing this I have received a long letter from Wm. Palmer sent to meet me here, with an account of proceedings for the last twelve months. Little had been done in our affairs. I have not yet heard anything from Doveton, and cannot expect to hear for a fortnight. From what I can gather Martin has reported to the Govt. the total inefficiency of Sir C. M.'s plans at Hyderabad, and is in bad odour with him and with Bayley. In the letter I showed Lord Wm. and Wm. P. there was a paragraph about the strange fact that while Sir C. M. described C. Loll as a monster of inquiry, Mr. Martin had treated him with the confidence which you used to give him, and that all his despatches sounded his praise. Lord Wm. said 'I can confirm that, it is most singular, that two such opposite accounts should be given of the same man'

(28) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Calcutta,*
26 February 1829

" I start in a steamer tomorrow for Masulipatam, and thence by Dawk to Hyderabad, Lady Rumbold remaining here, at Palmer's for the present, and will pass most of her time with Lady Wm. Bentinck at Barrackpore. Lord Wm. B. is gone to Penang and will be absent about six weeks. The Bentincks have been all kindness to us, and we have lived with them so *intimately*, that the impression here is nearly as strong as it was in Lord Hastings's time. This must do us some good. In matters of business, however, he is dreadfully cautious and evidently timid. He is afraid of appearing partial, and will not even do as much as he *admits* he ought to do, from that cause. He is *certainly* deeply interested in us, and I find out constantly little things he has done for us which he will not even tell me of. I hope that he will have sent home some *minutes* which may be useful, for he has had to oppose Sir C. M. who has been violent and vindictive as ever Doveton writes me very kind letters. He says I shall like Martin, and Oliphant, and others write me that he will be very civil to me. He means to go home at the end of the year, and I do not yet know who will succeed him. Lord W. will certainly not allow any *avowed* enemy of mine to go there.

Chundoo Loll is beginning to shew symptoms of an impression that our day is coming, and matters go on better, but Wm. P. is purposely resting on his oars till I arrive there. C. Loll has sent me very kind messages"

(29) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Masulipatam,*
4 June 1829

" I arrived here by Dawk two days back, and am hourly expecting the arrival of the Ship ' John ' from Madras to convey me to Calcutta Martin and I have had discussions and energetic ones ; at the same time we have kept upon the best terms, and parted with great cordiality. In truth he has behaved very well to me in essentials, and I believe his intentions to be excellent ; but he is too much under the domination of some Bengallee Moonshee, whose turpitude and rascality are so notorious that one wonders how he imposes on Mr. Martin. This man takes any bribe from 10 Rupees to 100,000 without Shame or concealment. Martin is told it by all those who care for him, and won't believe it. I have been obliged in one or two cases to allude to it in a manner too pointed to be misunderstood, and have offered to *prove* my assertions, but he never calls for proof. My first fight was about my visit to Chundoo Loll. He was told that I had free access to him for the settlement of the private debts When I requested to attend him on his first visit ; he said that my going with him the first time would be considered as giving too direct a support to my claims, but that I could go alone when I pleased An appointment was made by him with C. Loll, and I called upon Mr. M. on my way there to request he would make any observations he might think necessary, and also to offer to call upon him on my way back to state what had passed. He said this was quite unnecessary and I went. To my astonishment I found his Moonshee there, who took his seat with us. I immediately told C. Loll that I would not have come had I known he was engaged and asked for roogsut [*rukhsat*—permission to leave]. The old gentleman was very kind in his manner, evidently distressed and begged me to stay. I obstinately refused and came away. I immediately wrote a demi-official letter to Mr. M., reminded him of what had passed at my two conversations with him ; of his never having hinted at the intention of sending his Moon-shee. I added that I never would consent to have my conversations reported to him by any native servant, or my word liable to be placed in a situation to be weighed against his, and that I considered his presence 'en surveillance' over me derogatory to me and otherwise objectionable. Martin replied that he had adopted this as the proper course and intended to follow it. He said he had sent "*The Meer Moon-shee Moulvie Syud Obeid ool Hassan ; the confidential channel of communication between himself and the Nizam's*

Govt.' I requested he would consider my demi-official note as official, and forward our correspondence to Calcutta. In the meantime I told him that I would not go to C. Loll, but that Palmer would when necessary, having assented to meet the Moonshee rather than neglect our concerns. The answer from Calcutta was long coming, though my conduct, as I have told you was much approved. The reply was *curious and guarded*, but on a close examination it was admirably suited to my purpose. It says the Govt. approve of your reasons for not going with Sir W. R. *Without any reference to this case*, they consider that on general principles, when *you have communications* to make to the Nizam's Govt., if you don't go yourself, you should send an assistant, and not employ any native; and you are desired to attend to this in future. Martin very good humordly sent me the despatch, with a private note as soon as he received it. I should here tell you that pending this reference to Bengal, we had had other discussions, and that I had made as I hoped, considerable progress towards arranging the affairs of the House, and further that Martin had shewn a disposition to afford me considerable assistance. I called upon him, now, and expressed a wish to go to C. Loll; he said that as no assistant was at Hyderabad, he would send Capn. Stokes, who is one of the officers in the Nizam's service, whom he calls his civil Secretary, but does not belong to the Residency. I told him I was certain he read his instructions wrong; that it was evident that the Govt. meant him to understand that I ought to go with him; or alone He could not, or would, not see this. I tried to persuade him, but found him obstinate; at the same time I saw that he had his reasons for not liking me to see C. Loll alone. I determined not to split upon this point, and told him that though nothing should induce me to make a visit upon those terms, I would not make a further reference to the Govt. and that if he continued to give me the same assistance he had lately appeared disposed to do, I did not care about going to C. Loll myself. He was evidently astonished but much gratified at this, and I must say he has behaved well hitherto in all matters that have passed through his hands; but nothing definite or important is completed.

Our second fight was about the Court of Justice. I must tell you that Martin has all along chosen to defend the supposed Court, and its competency; though it was notorious that its existence was to be doubted, and that Shereef oo Dien merely acted there as the servant of the Minister. [Martin eventually

agreed to certain changes] he agreed to insist upon some respectable man being appointed to write down, verbatim, what passed in Court; the same to be signed every day by Plaintiff and Defendants, and kept as a record. That two days a week should be fixed for hearing our suits, that parties should be compelled to attend, as also witnesses, and that oaths should be administered if necessary. This, and the permission given to partners, or trustees to attend the Court produced a great effect, and during several days that Palmer attended about small suits matters went on prosperously. At last we determined to attack the heirs of Ameer ool Moolk. [In this the greatest difficulty was experienced]. We got a verdict against the estate for half our claim for principal. We are now fighting for the interest, which we must recover I imagine. . . .

My next battle with Mr. M. which was going on about the time of Mouluvee Hyder's appointment was a very curious one. Moon-er ool Moolk was security for three of four different dependants of his, for small sums of money. We had never been able to get six pence from any of them. About two years ago, Chundoo Loll undertook to negotiate with M. ool M. the settlement of his accounts. I should tell you that the Trustees have made many complaints of the delays which M. ool M. is allowed to interpose in the settlement of his accounts. While he pretends to complain that the delay is *caused by the trustees!!* for the purpose of swelling the demand against him for interest. In my correspondence with Mr. M. about these suits; I endeavoured to make him see that if M. ool M. were sincere in his wish to have his accounts settled, he could surely have no reason for objecting to so much being disposed of as related to these security accounts, and finally I proposed that we should give up the prosecution of the suits, leaving them to be adjusted by the Minister, with the other accounts on condition that M. ool M. should pay us five or six lacs on acct. of his debt. Martin agreed to urge this for me, and the difficulty with which he made M. ool M. to agree to pay anything must have opened his eyes. I have no doubt, however, that Martin will in this instance keep him to his engagements"

(30) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell. Calcutta,*
5 August 1829

" I have been sadly disappointed in Martin. Things went so well when I was there, and he promised so much that

I came away in spirits, and impressed with the notion that he would assist us. Indeed he assured me that he thought he had full power to do all that appeared necessary to ensure the settlement of two or three principal points for which I had been fighting. I cannot suppose that this was said with a view to get rid of me. Certain it is, however, that from the moment my back was turned, nothing was done. Indeed under one pretext or another everything which appeared to be concluded has been retrograding. The Minister says he cannot act without Mr. Martin and Mr. Martin says he has no instructions. We have got the 1st two lacs from Mooneer ool Moolk, and I hope we shall get the 2d too, but they are overdue. You remember the particulars of our claim against Ameer ool Moolk. He died without our being able to get anything from him. Regarding Mooneer ool Moolk's debt, we stand thus. Chundoo Loll has promised to get it settled, and for this purpose ordered the accounts to be made up, under his superintendence, by an accountant of ours, and one of M. ool M's. This promise was made two years ago, but as fast as the accounts draw to a close M. ool M. finds some pretext for commencing them again upon a new plan, and C. Loll always lets him do so. While I was at Hyderabad Mr. Martin appeared to interest himself in the accounts, and they were *actually finished*, and reported complete by the Minister. We were waiting only for his final orders, and Mr. M. assured me there could be, and should be no further delays. To my astonishment, however, after I came away Mooneer ool Moolk discovered a new reason for recommencing the accounts, and C. Loll has agreed to it. Unless something is done to put an end to this system God knows when it will stop. I apprehend the present plan is that it should last during the lives of the parties. Doveton has I know written to you and told you all that has passed at Hyderabad since the Nizam's death. The present man seems to be well satisfied with Chundoo Loll. The latter pretends to be in a fright about his place whenever he wants an excuse to do an injustice. He also pretends to think now and then that Mooneer ool Moolk succeeds in making interest at the Residency. I suspect, however, he feels very secure. The superintendants are still continued. Mr. Martin is very anxious to get rid of them, but his fears of Sir Charles Metcalfe, deter him from taking active measures. A scene was acted fifteen days ago at the Nizam's Durbar, which had been previously prepared, and of which I had information. The Nizam requested Mr. Martin to write to his Govt. to say that he solicited their removal, and would attend to the welfare of his

own districts. I don't know what effect this will have here. The despatch is not yet arrived. The Resolutions of the Creditors in England have been signed by most of those here, and will be probably by all. . . . I send you a list of the signatures and of those persons who are in England, who have not yet signed."

(31) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell. Ootacamund, Neelgherry Hills, 23 July 1830*

" The afflicting news I have received of the death of my friend D. Kinnaird is a severe blow to my feelings, and will be very unfortunate for my affairs I now send you copies of a letter I wrote to the Govr. Genl. from this place on the 28th of last May, and of Pakenham's (the private secretary's) note to me acknowledging the former. Poor Kinnaird was regularly informed by me of my movements and of the motives for them, but it is probable that you will be in ignorance of what has occurred lately, and I shall trouble you with an account of myself since Jany. last. My two last letters of last year to the Govt. appeared to have produced a great effect upon the mind of Lord William, but he told me, in January, that he could not come to any determination as to what was to be done in consequence of them, or of my former letter of August 13, 1829, till the enquiries, then on foot, regarding the conduct of the Resident's Moonshee had terminated. That he would then take up all Hyderabad matters at once; and he gave me to understand, that in the probability of his having to change the Resident, it would be better for me that his orders regarding us should be given to the new one. I saw the justice of this and felt its favourable tendency for me. At that time, however, Lord Wm. was going up the Country to Benares, to be absent two months; no orders therefore could be given till his return, by which time the change of the Monsoon would prevent my getting to Masulipatam by sea. Lord Wm. advised me, through Pakenham, to proceed to Masulipatam, and not to await his return, or the issue of orders, and told me that I should not remain long without having the means of action at Hyderabad. I determined, therefore, to proceed at once to Masulipatam. After this I received a confidential hint, that though my proceeding by sea to be within reach of Hyderabad was the best course I could adopt, yet it was considered that I should do better for myself, if I did not actually go to Hyderabad till the questions between the Trustees and the Moonshee, and between the Resident and

his Govt. were terminated. Soon after I reached this place I heard that the Committee [the Resident's assistants] had given in their written report upon the evidence produced [by] the Trustees before the Committee touching the charges brought by the former against the Moonshee ; and that the report, convicting the Moonshee upon all the Charges, had been transmitted to the Bengal Govt. I was further informed that the Govr. Genl. had determined to remove Mr. Martin to Dehlee and that a Successor would be appointed forthwith. From that time till the month of May. however, I continued in the constant expectation of hearing that his Lordship had acted upon his intentions, but got no intelligence, excepting from reports which stated that he had altered his intentions from the opposition of his Council. I at last wrote him the letter of which I now send you a Copy ; and you will see that it appears to have determined him. My letter reached on the day before Council day, and Pakenham appears to have written on the evening of the Council day. I have not heard anything more from Pakenham. The day after Pakenham wrote to me an express was sent off by the Supreme Govt. to Ravenshaw who had reached Masulipatam, by which he was desired to return immediately to Hyderabad and take charge of the Residency, and from that time all the communications from Calcutta were addressed to him. Among the first of these communications was the decision of the Supreme Govt. about the Moonshee. It was declared that everything alleged by the Trustees was proved against him, and he was dismissed the service with disgrace and Ravenshaw was desired to promulgate this and to make it public as possible. For God sake, my dear Russell, see my friends Campbell and Lindsay and shew them a copy of the enclosure to the address of the Govr. Genl. Tell them that tho' we may hope for something less of prejudice to our interests under a new Resident that till something is done from home we have no chance of getting justice. Mr. Martin's Moonshee ruled him in the most extraordinary manner ; he could make him write or sign **any** paper he liked, and Mr. Martin confirmed anything this fellow chose to say to the Minister. The Moonshee had a bargain with any fellow who owed us money, and was engaged to protect them from paying us anything. During our litigation before the nominal Court of justice the Moonshee dictated every attempt that was made to evade payment by our debtors, and you will see in the papers, relating to that subject, which I sent Kinnaird, that the hand of a man acquainted with English custom and

English legal quibbles and technicalities is evident throughout

If there be any justice in the Court of Directors they will write to the Govr. Genl. to state distinctly that their order in their despatch of Feby. 1828 has not been obeyed. That we have not been placed in a situation to obtain justice and that the Resident should be instructed to impress upon the Nizam or his Minister the necessity of his interfering to see all our just claims settled. If, as I am inclined to hope, Campbell is to be Deputy this year, he will be Chairman in April 1831, and if you will talk to him on the subject he will I think try to carry some such measure. For God sake see him, for I do not write to him relying upon your kindness to do so."

(32) [Enclosed in (31)] *Sir William Rumbold to Lord W. C. Bentinck, Governor General, Ootakamund. On the Neelgherry Hills, 28 May 1830*

" I am induced to hope, that the failure hitherto, of my Letters and representations to your Lordship's Government in effecting any diminution of our wrongs, or procuring any orders for justice may be owing to the investigation of other charges against the Moonshee being in progress. But as neither continued the investigation of his conduct, nor the report of the Committee, convicting him on the charges preferred by the Trustees, has effected any diminution of his substantive authority, and he continues to exercise, though nominally suspended from his Functions, a most extraordinary degree of power and influence, I have considered, that it was prudent to suspend for a period all our efforts, and not to attempt a further contention against the combination of circumstances, which have hitherto opposed and baffled all our endeavours to obtain justice,—and as my return to Hyderabad under such circumstances, would have been not only useless, but injurious, I have accompanied my family here. I entreat your Lordship to recollect, that while we have been compelled, during so long a Period, to remain inactive, we have been exposed, as have been many of our Creditors to increasing pecuniary difficulties, and that the Property at Hyderabad, to which we look in the first instance, for recovery of our claims, is daily subject to fraud and embezzlement. While the pecuniary circumstances of many of our Debtors are becoming more embarrassed, and our expectations of eventual recovery from those Parties are daily diminishing

After what I have thus submitted to your Lordship's attention, it cannot be necessary that I should enter into any further explanation of the many serious calamities, which result to our affairs from the delay of justice, and as the Report of the Committee on the charges preferred by the Trustees has been at length transmitted to you, I venture to solicit, that you will not allow the Proceedings now pending regarding the Moonshee to occasion any further delays in the issue of such Orders, as you may consider just towards us.

The exertion of the authority used on behalf of the Moonshee, and the degree to which the Minister appears to have been induced to compromise his character for him, will account for the difficulty with which the proof of any one fact be adduced against him, notwithstanding the notoriety of his extensive venality. It will consequently account for the Trustees having been precluded from selecting, for the grounds of their original charges, the strongest cases within their knowledge. It will similarly account for the suppression of many complaints by other Persons. . . . I will only observe that the subserviency to the British Resident of the Minister is notorious. That it is evident the latter supports the Moonshee to the utmost limit of his power, and that the conduct of the Committee proves, that they were fully convinced of that fact.

Whether the Minister's support of the Moonshee is distinctly sanctioned by Mr. Martin or not, is immaterial. It is clear that the former must conceive it acceptable to the Resident, since the latter has never manifested any disapprobation of the outrages committed to support the Moonshee, and to intimidate Witnesses from appearing against him. Mr. Martin alone could have removed that impression, but so long as it exists, whether it be well founded or not, it is equally injurious in its effects upon us, and upon all those, who are considered as having been opposed to the Moonshee, and is fatal to our hopes of obtaining justice at Hyderabad."

(33) [Enclosed in (31)] *Thomas Pakenham to Sir William Rumbold, Govt. House, 15 June 1830*

"My dear Sir William,

Your letter of the 28th ulto. reached Lord William yesterday evening and I am desired by His Lordship to inform you, the [that] Mr. Martin's appointment to Delhi has been determined upon and will pass immediately. His Successor has not yet been

determined on, but I think the matter will be settled in a few days, when I hope to be authorised to let you know on whom Lord William's selection will fall. The business has taken longer than was expected, and so long as matters remained undecided, I saw little use in writing to you. Indeed I will candidly acknowledge that I was desirous of avoiding the appearance of corresponding with you while things remained as they were. I am on the point of starting for Barrackpore so hope you will excuse a hurried letter.

etc., etc.,

(Signed) Thos. Pakenham."

(34) *Sir William Rumbold to Henry Russell, Hyderabad,*
30 August 1830

" My dear Russell,

I wrote you long letters, dated the 23rd July. I now proceed with my narrative. When Pakenham wrote to me, a letter was also written to Major Stewart, the Resident at Gwalior, to offer him the Hyderabad Residency. His acceptance reached Calcutta in time to put him in orders on 9th July, and Pakenham wrote to me about the same time to announce it and to say that he was actually on his route to Calcutta, where he was to remain a few days on his progress to this place. I hope and trust that Lord Wm. may tell him to see justice done us, but he seems so bewildered with the Court's orders and Sir C. M.'s influence that there is no saying what he will do. He considers that the despatch of June 1828 is most peremptory in enforcing the orders of Feby. 1826, prohibiting all interference on the part of the Resident, and that it annuls any benefit of that description which we might otherwise have claimed under the Court's orders of February 1828. I maintain that the orders of Feby. 1828 cannot be carried into effect without some assistance be afforded by the Resident, and I still hope that the Court may be induced to write to that effect. Those orders were founded upon a distinct admission that great injustice had been done us, and upon the solemn decision of the judges. Lord Wm. is so strangely bent upon adhering to his opinions, and upon acting upon what he chooses to consider the spirit of the Court's orders, that he will not issue any order by which assistance can be afforded to us ever so indirectly. I asked him to send a Commission to examine our claims and that we would pay the expence. He said: 'No I dare not do that, that would be assisting

you.' I asked him to let the Resident tell the Minister that Govt. expected him to see justice fairly administered in our case. He says that would be considered as assisting us. I asked him to write to the Nizam to tell him to decide our claims. I get the same answer. I ask him what he has done to carry into effect the orders of Feby. 1828? He says they are in fact nothing since the despatch of June following annuls them. I ask him whether it is possible the Court could mean the first despatch to be a dead letter. He says he has forwarded it to the Rest. I tell him he was distinctly directed to issue orders upon it. He says he referred it to the Resident who replied that we had suffered no injury, and therefore no orders were necessary. I ask him if he believes it possible that we suffered no injury; he said that it appeared to him a most extraordinary answer of Mr. M.'s, but that he must act upon it!!! A very little on the part of the Court would put all this to right. God grant that Campbell may be able to get something done. Is it not singular that Mr. Martin should have ventured to keep charge of the Residency after his very unceremonious removal, and after Ravenshaw had been directed to take charge. The latter is a quiet man, and appears to have submitted quietly, and Mr. M. continues to act as Resident here for a month after he was in point of fact removed. He seems to have thought that a great deal of parade would cover the disgrace attached to his removal, and managed to get the Nizam to pay him a visit. He gave colours to the Corps at Bolarum amidst fine speeches and feasting and has I believed contrived to make the natives think that his removal to Delhee is promotion, and honor. He is now at Masulipatam waiting a conveyance to Calcutta. What his plans are I cannot tell you. He has told some people that he has received the most flattering letter from Lord Wm. B.; while to his friends he says, that he thinks he has been very ill used; that he will not go to Dehlee, will not call upon the Govr. Genl. and will return to England this year. My own opinion is that he will be too happy to call on the Governor General and to go to Delhee if he finds that he may do so, without explaining his conduct, but rather than attempt that he will be off to England in the sulks. William Palmer and I left the Neelgherries, by dawk on the 12th of this month, and arrived here on the 25th having been much obstructed on our road by rain and nullahs. He is wonderfully recovered, and bore the fatigue of the journey very well, but he would have done better to remain there a little longer. We considered, however, that it was necessary to run all risks for him to be seen here. for Mr. Martin's people had

circulated a report that his absence was a feint, and that he was not permitted to return, and a grand intrigue was going on to get the Nizam to write himself to the Govr. Genl. to request that he might not be allowed to come here again. I cannot tell you as yet what we shall be able to accomplish. Mr. Ravenshaw is acting, but as he expects to be relieved in a week or two by the new Resident, it is not likely that he will pass any opinions in our affairs. I have not yet any account of Stewart's having reached Calcutta, so that he may not be here for a month. The Minister has sent civil messages, but I fear he will not be honest enough to do anything till he sees whether we can compel him. It strikes me, however, that Stewart will be authorized to take at least as much interest in our concerns as the Resident does in all other matters in this Country and in that case he cannot but interfere to move the Minister to act upon his own decisions. In that case a very little time would arrange a great deal for us, for the foundation was all laid in Mr. Martin's time. In fact the Minister went great lengths towards settling our affairs and gave many decisions in our favor, which he would have avoided had the Resident and his Moonshee not told him that after all he would not be compelled to act upon them. I trust we shall now reap the benefit of that treachery, and that he will be told that he must act upon them."

(35) *Henry Russell to Sir William Rumbold. Swallofield,
30 June 1833*

" Before this letter reaches you, you will most likely have seen the new blue volume of Hyderabad Papers. After the interval of so many years, I did not expect a public revival of the subject; especially at the moment when the Charter was under discussion. Two motions were made in the quarterly court in March, one by Malcolm and the other by Rigby, neither of them, I have reason to believe, was made at the instigation of any party in the Direction; but either would have been sufficient to produce the papers. Astell and his party, though less numerous than they were, are still as vehement and vindictive as ever, and will never suffer their discretion to restrain them from doing anything by what they can gratify their malignity. Malcolm, I did think, was actuated, underhand, by hostility towards you or me, but this as far at least as you are concerned, he disclaimed in a message to Mr. Arabin; and, since his death, I have been led to think that I did him an injustice in imparting

any personal motives to him. His object was to enforce a rigid rule of non-interference on the part of our Govt. in all claims of British subjects on native princes or their dependants ; and it appears that he had a fancy for the establishment of a special tribunal, to which all matters of this kind should be referred. Rigby is a lawyer. He was in Westminster hall when the motion for the mandamus was argued, and meant to call the Directors to account for their indiscretion in engaging in a conflict with the Board of Control, on a point of law in which they were sure to be defeated. What further measures may be pursued by the adverse party is still uncertain ; and, for that reason, I also am undecided as to the course which I shall take. In the former discussion I found the effect of a speech so much more powerful and extensive than that of a pamphlet, that I had much rather speak than print. I have again qualified as a proprietor, and shall take part in any debate that may arise on the subject. . . .

In a considerable degree also. I must be guided by the impression that is made by the Papers. You, who remember the sensation produced by those in 1824, would be astonished to see the indifference with which those printed seem to have been received. Not one single newspaper has even alluded to the subject. I have not heard of its being at all a topic of conversation ; and Doveton, who went to the Oriental Club a few days ago, told me that the Volume was lying on the table with the leaves absolutely uncut. I must however be prepared for any course that may become expedient ; and, with that view, I am going carefully through the papers, and making copious notes as I go. I sent you a copy of the one I have made on the subject of my own alleged connexion with the House. The other topics into which it will be principally necessary for me to go are the Aurangabad contract, and the Sixty lac loan, because they are those, my support of which is made the ground of distinct charge against me. About the Aurangabad contract I find no difficulty. I mean to consider it in two points of view ; first, as it operated in our own interests, and secondly as it operated on those of the Nizam, and it will be easy for me to make an equally strong case in both. But the question of the loan has been so tortured and twisted in Mr. Peacock's elaborate observations, by which he has endeavoured to overthrow all the statements that have yet been made in support of it, that, fallacious as I am satisfied they are, I may, from want of technical skill, as well as want of information, be unable to detect and expose his errors. Whether I am called upon to speak or write, I shall do the best I can to make myself master of the subject ; but you and Palmer will of course

come to the examination of it with advantages which I cannot profess. You will see what the particular allegations are, to which you will have to address yourselves ; and I shall be glad to hear from you what you make Mr. Peacock's fallacies to consist in, and by what facts and arguments they can best be overthrown. Strive as he may, I do not see how he can get over the fact, that your advances to the Minister, in the six months from March to August 1820, amounted, without interest, to between thirty-nine and forty lacs, being ten times as much as the average amount of your advances during the same period through the five preceding years. No attempt is made either to deny or to account for this extraordinary excess nor can it be accounted for upon any other supposition than that the payments composing it were actual payments on account of the loan.

The two lacs of Rupees which Sir C. Metcalfe asserts to have been drawn from Calcutta, and to have been employed in the House, did not, as I have stated in my Notes, belong to me. They were placed at 12 per cent. in the hands of Bunnallee Doss.

Arabin, than whom it would be impossible to have a more zealous, and difficult to have a more able, advocate left Town for Paris a few days before the papers were delivered. He told me that he would come over in case any debate should take place at the India House, when, of course, it will be important that we should bring together as many friendly members as we can : but, in his view of the subject, as far as your interests are concerned, he wishes the subject not to be further agitated, either in debate or print. He says your object has been accomplished in the despatch, as altered and enforced by the Board, and that as further proceedings can do you know [*sic*] good, they may do you some harm. In this respect however the choice is not in your hands. If our adversaries stir, we must be ready to encounter them. My brother Charles is in Town, attending this reformed Parliament, which seems to talk as much, and do as little, as the most sanguine of its maligners could have predicted. Mrs. Russell is quite well, and desires her kindest regards and best wishes to you. Remember us to Palmer, and any other friends that may be with you ; and believe me, etc.

H. R."

C. COLLIN DAVIES

PROBLEMS OF SIGILLOGRAPHY IN INDIA

Sigillography is a well-developed science in the West, while it has as yet to take root in India. Even the meaning of the term, as the name of a distinct branch of learning, is hardly known to any but archivists in our country. The present study, though elementary, intends to give some idea on this important but relatively neglected subject and to focus public attention on a new type of historical material which is awaiting discovery in the bundles of medieval deeds.

Connotation—In brief the term sigillography signifies a critical study of seals. It is derived from *sigillum* which in Latin means a seal. It is also known as sphragistics. The term seal is employed to describe both the implement for making the impression and the impression itself. This article relates to the latter usage except where the seal is referred to as the matrix.

Practice—The practice of using seals as emblems of magic, power and sovereignty can be traced back to remote antiquity. In the earlier ages the seal was used as a taboo. Later it became a symbol of power and was regarded as an attribute of sovereignty like the crown and throne both in the Orient and the Occident. In India, seals played quite an important role throughout its recorded history. We have not only references to the practice of sealing in ancient and medieval India but also have actual specimens of ancient as well as medieval seals. With the advent of the Mughals on the Indian stage we have an unbroken series of seals till under the influence of the West the seal was supplanted by signature.

Importance of Sigillography—The importance of sigillography is manifold. The archivist owes a great deal to the sigillographist but for whom many a document would have remained closed codices—undated and unidentified. It is well known that in medieval times the seal was more important than the signature. It used to be sworn to by witnesses and therefore served as an unfailing guide to authentication and as a means of identification. But this is not all. The importance of seals for the study of art cannot be over-estimated. Do seals follow the same trend in art as calligraphy, iconography and so forth? What is the difference in the symbology of the coins and seals? These are but a few questions on which a sigillographist

would be able to provide information for the expert in art and iconography. But what is important from the historical point of view is the fact that the sigillum or legend which sets forth the name and style of the owner provides us with data which not only corroborates and supplements the known facts but at times alters the existing conceptions of history.

Scope—In various parts of India small inscribed tablets of clay, which were baked into terra-cotta or left to harden naturally, are found in large numbers. The best known instances are the Buddhist votive tablets. But they cannot technically be called seals. The other clay-tablets can be called seals inasmuch as they at times contain devices only, sometimes only legends and sometimes both legends and devices. A large and highly interesting collection of clay-seals of the fourth and fifth centuries was found at Basrah, in Muzaffarpur District, Bihar. The bulk of this collection consists of seals of officials, guilds, corporations, temples, private individuals, etc.¹ Besides clay-seals, we come across copper or bronze seals. In ancient India the most usual method of authenticating a document was by attaching a copper or bronze reproduction of the royal seal. One of the bronze seals is of particular interest as it presents its legend in three different characters, viz., Brahmi, Kharoshtri or Kharoshtri and Greek.² But most of the medieval Indian seals are either impressed on paper or attached on sealing lac. Coming to the Mughal period the seals we meet with are almost bewildering in number and variety. Among others we find those of the Mughal Emperors, institutions and the nobility. We also come across seals of various local dynasties, viz., those of Oudh, Murshidabad, Mysore, Nizam, Travancore, Arcot, Poona, Gwalior, Nagpur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, etc. Then there are also the seals of the officials of the East India Company, viz., Governors-General, Commanders-in-Chief, etc. The seals of several neighbouring countries, viz., Iran, Muscat, China, Nepal, Burma, Tibet, Bhutan, Malaya, etc., are also found in Indian repositories. Specimens of many of the types mentioned above are found in the custody of the National Archives of India, but a large quantity lies scattered all over the country in private custody altogether uncared for. As a result they suffer from various forms of decay, e.g., cracking, scratching, collapsing,

¹ *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Oxford, 1908, Vol. II, p. 38; *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India for 1903-4*, pp. 101-22 and plates 40-42.

² *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 1901, p. 98, plate 20; *Imperial Gazetteer*, II, p. 26.

staining and perishing due to changes in their constituent elements. If early steps are not taken to preserve these seals it is feared that they will be irretrievably lost, leaving a big gap in our cultural heritage.

Preservation—Preservation of seals involves several operations, e.g., repairing, cleaning, restoring and packing. As far as repairing is concerned, it is generally admitted that the mending should be done with the same material as that of the original. Care should particularly be taken not to fake a broken design or hide in any way the modern work put into repairing. It is, therefore, advisable to use for repair a colour different from that of the material of the original seal. The condition of the seal at the time of repair should always be noted. As far as cleaning is concerned, it should be done with the softest available brush in order to avoid scratches. The finest watch-maker's cleaning brush is the best. Coming to packing, it may be noted that it varies with the way in which the seal is affixed to the document. Let us take pendent-seals first, though they are very uncommon in India. There are various methods of packing but the most elaborate, according to Sir Hilary Jenkinson, is the one "by which the seal along with suitable 'quilts' is placed in the cardboard box, in the sides of which a hole is cut for the tab, tongue or cords by which it is suspended. When this is used it will be wise to secure the seal by a stitch passing over the tab or cord and through the bottom of the box, and, in some cases, also to have an attachment to the box of cloth or some other material, which may be fastened by a stitch to the document so as to take the weight."³ The packing of pendent-seals though elaborate is easy, but the preservation of applied seals, is difficult inasmuch as the documents bearing seals are very frequently made up into bundles, files or even volumes. Shellac seals in such a position have a tendency to break. It is, therefore, necessary to give some protection to applied seals. According to Sir Hilary Jenkinson, "a simple plan is to make a small quilt, strengthen one edge with a fold of linen, and through this sew it on to the document at the side of the seal, over which it forms a hinged flap. A more elaborate plan is to insert a stout guard in the volume or file and fasten on to this a sheet of millboard having a hole cut in it to fit (with plenty of margin for possible shifting) over the seal. In the case of a loose single document, having an applied seal, it is best to put it between

³ Hilary Jenkinson, 'Some Notes on the Preservation, Moulding and Casting of Seals', *The Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. IV, p. 392.

two boards, the top one with the hole, as described, being hinged at the side to another, to which the document itself is fastened."⁴ But from the point of view of the archivist the making of a permanent mould is perhaps the most important of all the processes connected with seals.

Moulding and Casting—According to Sir Hilary Jenkinson, the only satisfactory substance for making moulds is plaster of Paris, the finest obtainable quality being used (that known as Dental) and even this after being sifted through a fine gauge. It is not impossible to use warm gelatine even on wax seals and gelatine moulding is an easy process.⁵ Mr. H. S. Kingsford recommends modelling or paraffin wax for making moulds but according to the same authority a better composition consists of 1 lb. of well dried and sifted whitening, with 4 oz. of bees-wax and 4 oz. of lard. The last two are to be melted and the whitening added by degrees and stirred in. Mr. Kingsford writes, "The more the mixture is worked after getting cold, the better it gets. To make a mould, a large enough piece should be worked in the hands until fairly soft. Then flatten it out to a little over the size of the seal, and squeeze it all over, not too hard at first, but afterwards firmly, especially over the deep parts and inscriptions. Wet it before applying to the seal, to prevent it sticking, and let it get cold before removing."⁶ Casts can then be made. There are various methods of making casts, but the four materials generally used are metal, sulphur, plaster and wax. Casts of seals can be made on metal by means of electro-typing but it does not adequately represent a waxen original. Sulphur is inflammable and is not very satisfactory as it gives a slightly blurred rendering of the finer lines. While plaster casts are cheaper in material, they cost more than wax ones in time and labour. The ordinary way of using wax for casts is to pour it molten into the mould. But a better method, according to Sir Hilary Jenkinson, is to place the cake of wax on the table and have the mould pressed into it in a strictly vertical direction. The cake of wax should be from a quarter to half an inch thick, according to the depth of relief in the mould.⁷ The use of casts has many advantages. It saves handling and consequently risk to the original is avoided. They easily lend themselves to

⁴ Hilary Jenkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 396.

⁶ H. S. Kingsford, *Helps for Students of History (Seals)*, London, 1920, p. 55.

⁷ Hilary Jenkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 401.

photography inasmuch as they are easier to adjust and can be made in any colour. It may not be preposterous to suggest that the photographs or casts of every seal not in the National Archives of India should be made and deposited in some central place. But this is not the end of the problem of seals. Many a time we are confronted with the problem of seeking confirmation of a certain seal; the impression before us may be damaged or partly legible and yet we do not know where to find a perfect impression. The problem can only be solved by preparing comprehensive catalogues of seals in public and private custody.

Cataloguing—A catalogue of seal impressions if scientifically compiled will provide a good deal of valuable information. Any catalogue worth its name should give the following details:

1. Call Mark. 2. Illustration
3. Location
4. Type
5. Sigillum
6. Translation
7. Date 8. Shape
9. Device
10. Design
11. Direction of the Sigillum
12. Dimensions
13. Language 14. Script.....
15. Material 16. Colour
17. State of Preservation
18. Method of Attachment
19. Any other information
20. Remarks including references to other impressions

The following explanation will facilitate the understanding of the above.

2. Illustration—No written description can possibly enable a reader to visualize a seal unknown to him. A photograph or sketch can be more communicative than words.

3. Location—This means the exact position of the seal in the document. In the case of a clay-seal the site where it was found may be mentioned. If the seal is affixed on a document or manuscript, a brief account of the latter may be given.

4. Type—The particular group or groups to which the seal can be assigned.

5. Sigillum, i.e., legend—If legends are on both the obverse and the reverse, they must be carefully distinguished. Illegible letters should be enclosed in square brackets.

6. Translation—If the sigillum is in a language other than English, it must be translated into English.

7. Date—The date which occurs in the seal. In whatever era it might be, it should be converted into Christian era. The discrepancies, if any, should be indicated in the foot-notes.

8. Shape—Seals are of various shapes, viz., circular, vesical, oval, hexagonal, octagonal, rectangular, triangular, square, lozenge-shaped, etc.

9. Device—This includes emblem, insignia and other charges.

10. Design—Some seals have floral, geometrical and other designs.

11. Direction of the Sigillum—Whether the legend is to be read vertically, horizontally, clockwise or anti-clockwise. In the last two cases it should be clearly indicated at which point the legend commences. This information can be illustrated by means of an arrow—the tail to begin at the appropriate point and the arrow-head to indicate the direction.

12. Dimensions—Greatest height and width or diameter. Measurements should be taken carefully with dividers. Measurements in millimeters should refer only to the impression and not to the whole of the wax.

13. Language—The seals found in India are in various foreign as well as Indian languages, e.g., Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, English, Chinese, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, etc. While most of the

Indian seals are unilingual, we do come across bilingual and trilingual seals also.

14. Script—The style of writing which is called seal-character.

15. Material—Clay, copper, wax, shellac, etc., generally provided the sealing material. It would be interesting in this connection to find out when shellac sealing first appeared in India and the chemical changes, if any, produced in it by age. According to Abul Fazl, the sap of trees like Kunar, Bar, Pipal, etc., provided lac, which like wax got warm when exposed to fire but got afterwards cool and hard.^a

16. Colour—The colour of the seal may be mentioned. In the case of the majority of Indian seals, the colour is either black or red.

17. State of Preservation—It should be clearly stated whether the state of preservation is good or bad and whether the impression is incomplete, damaged, blurred or chipped. If the seal is mutilated or fragmentary, the actual size of the fragment and its relation to the complete seal should roughly be indicated.

18. Method of Attachment—Whether affixed direct on the document or appended on a tongue, or tag or laces. If the last be the case, the colour of the laces should be noted.

This gives in bare outline how a catalogue of seals should be made. But an ideal catalogue would be one wherein seals are classified on scientific lines.

Classification—Seals are of various kinds. They can be classified according to the material on which they are attached. 1. Clay-seals: When an impression is found on clay tablets, it is called a clay-seal; 2. Metal-seals: These are technically called "bullae" (Lat. bulla, a boss, or circular metal ornament) and they are suspended from the documents. Most of the ancient Indian seals are found on copper; 3. Wax-seals: When an impression is affixed on sealing wax, it is called a wax-seal; 4. Wafer-seals: When the seal is formed on the document by means of wafer and not wax, it is called a wafer-seal.

Seals can also be classified according to the design of the matrix as follows: 1. Single seal or seal with an impression on one side only, produced by the use of one matrix. 2. Double seal or seal with impression on both sides which can be distinguished as obverse and reverse. 3. Counter-seal or seal with

^a Abul Fazl: *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eng. Tr. by H. Blochmann, Cal, 1927, p. 274.

impressions on both sides produced by two matrices of different shape and size.

Seals can also be classified according to their shape as under :
1. Round or circular seals ; 2. Vesical or pointed oval seals ;
3. Rectangular seals ; 4. Square seals ; 5. Triangular seals ; 6. Lozenge-shaped seals ; 7. Hexagonal seals ; 8. Octagonal seals, etc.

As far as the subject matter is concerned seals are classified thus : 1. Official seals which indicate rank or office ; 2. Ecclesiastical seals which relate to the church ; 3. Private seals which relate to individuals in their private capacity. The catalogue of seals in the British Museum is arranged more or less on the lines indicated above. Seals can also be divided into the following three categories. 1. Public, 2. Institutional, and 3. Private. Public seals can be subdivided into Central (Imperial) and Local (Dynastic). Institutional seals can also be subdivided into Ecclesiastical and Judicial. The final arrangement is a matter of opinion but a chronological arrangement within a geographical framework appears to be the most satisfactory as far as the seals found in India are concerned. It is, therefore, suggested that they should be classified as. 1. Foreign, and 2. Indian. Indian seals can be subdivided into Public, Institutional and Private as mentioned above. This classification will not only be convenient, but will also facilitate the study of sigillum or seal-character as developed at different places as well as the art of seal-engraving as practised in different regions.

Sigillum—In engraving the sigillum the seal-engraver often indulged in flourishes, embellishments and variations making it difficult for a layman to decipher it. He also displayed much ingenuity in the arrangement and treatment of the legend which in many ways is the most important part of the seal. It usually sets forth the name of the owner. Sometimes the sigillum contains the name as well as the designation and titles of the owner. These titles are either official or honorary, civil or military, temporal or ecclesiastical. They are generally indicative of the relation of the holder with his social surroundings or the sphere of his political and moral authority or jurisdiction. In some cases the name of the master is added to the personal name as an additional attribute. In some seals the name of the owner is followed by that of his father, while others give the pedigree of the owner. Such seals are called lineal seals. Some seals bear a motto, a rhyming verse or a pious ejaculation often indicative of humility.

Indian seals generally have a tendency to record the date in broad terms only. The dates they bear are rarely those of the documents to which they are affixed. They are usually of an earlier origin. Mostly these dates refer to the accession of a reigning monarch. Usually the date is given at one place but sometimes the figures forming the date are scattered amongst the letters of the legend. This date is useful as it provides us with a clue to the age of the seal. The names and titles contained in the sigillum provide us with information which has hitherto remained unexploited. Some seals have only legends and some only devices, but others bear both legends and devices.

Device—A few words may be said regarding the different kinds of devices which were employed in ancient and medieval Indian seals. Earlier Indian seals contain emblems like the royal insignia or coat of arms. The figures of an elephant, a lion seated with a staff, a tiger, a serpent, a horse standing in front of a sacrificial post, *svastika*, a lamp-stand surmounted by the sun and the crescent moon, etc., are the usual devices found in ancient Indian seals.

Since the modelling of animal figures is prohibited in Islam, the Muslim rulers of India usually avoided them in their seals and devoted their artistic ingenuity to creating rhythm in lines. Their sense of mathematical precision is well displayed in the execution of the legend and the geometrical as well as floral designs. But this principle of avoiding animal figures was not strictly adhered to. Emperor Jahangir, for example, represented the figures of Jesus and the Virgin Mary in some of his seals.⁹ The device and the legend wrought in the seal provide us with data for the study of the art of seal-engraving as it developed at different places.

Seal-engraving—Seal-engraving was an art and seal-engravers like their brother craftsmen had to undergo training which was long and difficult. In the medieval period apprentices having good education used to take lessons from the calligraphists of the day and then served for several years with a master-engraver. Great care was taken to ensure the genuineness of a seal. Engravers were forbidden to engrave two exactly similar seals for the same person. Whenever a seal was lost the owner got some trifling alterations made in the new

⁹ Maclagan, E., *The Jesuits and the Great Moghul*, London, 1932, p. 70; *Tuzuk*, II, pp. 200-01.

one such as a change in design or date so that forgery could easily be detected. The shops of seal-engravers were regularly searched by the police so that they might not be tempted to put their skill to illegal use. It is, however, to be regretted that the names of only a few celebrated seal-engravers of the medieval period have come down to us. Altun at the court of Timur was reckoned a master of this art.¹⁰ Abul Fazl gives the names of the following masters of the craft at Akbar's court: Maulana Maqsdud of Harat, Tamkin of Kabul, Mir Dost of Kabul, Maulana Ibrahim, Maulana Ali Ahmad of Delhi.¹¹ Ghulam Muhammad refers to Mirza Muhammad Ali, who, according to him, was unrivalled among the seal-engravers of his age.¹² Like all other arts, the engraving of seals in the medieval period of Indian history underwent certain changes characteristic of different times and regions. It would be interesting in this connection to undertake a comparative study of seals and coins of the medieval period. Such a study would provide useful data for an expert in art and iconography. While seal-impressions are found in a large number, we know very little about the instrument with which they were made—the matrix.

Matrix—As instances of matrices we must mention first some objects from Harappa of which quite a few have been published.¹³ From Sankisa-Basantpur in Farrukhabad District, U.P., we have a steatite or soap-stone seal-stamp.¹⁴ In this line, however, perhaps the most important find is the rock-cut seal-matrix found at Rohtasgarh in Sahabad District, Bihar, which dates back to the early seventh century.¹⁵ The material most commonly used for this purpose was, however, silver or copper. Gold was used but very rarely. The mounted stones bearing the sigillum were of various kinds, viz., cornelian, garnet, agate, coral, turquoise, etc. It is, however, a matter for regret that no matrices of medieval seals have come down to us. The practice of erasing from the matrix the name of the king immediately after his death probably explains this lacuna. If the name could not be conveniently erased,

¹⁰ Allan, J., Art, Khatam, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 924.

¹¹ Abul Fazl, *Ain*, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

¹² Ghulam Muhammad, *Tadhkira-i-Khushnavisan*, Cal., 1910, p. 66.

¹³ *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 48; *Archæological Survey of India*, Vol. V, plate 33, no. 1.

¹⁴ *Imp. Gaz.*, p. 48; *A.S.I.*, XI, plate 9, no. 1.

¹⁵ *Imp. Gaz.*, p. 49; Fleet, J., *Inscriptions of the early Gupta Kings and their Successors*, 1888, III, p. 283.

the engraving was entirely removed in order to make room for another sculpture upon a new superficies.¹⁶ This proves that particular care was taken to see that the seal of one person was not used by another. It would, in this connection, be interesting to know something about the custody of seals.

Custody—People of humble rank used to carry their seals in their breast pocket. Some of them suspended it round their neck. But the dignitaries used to have a confidential seal-bearer called *muhrdar* who carried the signet in a small bag in his breast pocket and produced it whenever required. There was a regular post of royal *muhrdar* under the Mughals. During the early part of Akbar's rule, the great seal was in the charge of Khwaja Jahan¹⁷, but the round small seal called *uzuk* was in the charge of one of the queens.¹⁸ The great seal was also transferred to a queen after the fall of the Khwaja in the eleventh year of Akbar's reign.¹⁹ When Khan-i-Azam Mirza Aziz Koka became *vakil* in the fortieth year of the reign, he was given the charge of the great seal.²⁰ Jahangir refers to the custody of his seal only once in his *Tuzuk*, "When I was a prince I had entrusted, in consequence of my extreme confidence in him (Amirul Umara Sharif Khan), my own *uzuk* seal to the Amirul Umara, but when he was sent off to the province of Bihar I made it over to Parwiz. Now that Parwiz went off against the Rana, I made it over, according to the former arrangement, to the Amirul Umara."²¹ Under Shah Jahan the *uzuk* was first in charge of Mumtaz Mahal, and after the coronation of the king it was given to Asaf Khan at the request of the queen herself. When he was sent to the Deccan in the second year it was again handed over to the queen, and he received it back on his return. But when he went for the second time to the Deccan, after the death of the queen, it was given over to Begam

¹⁶ H. L. Rabino di Borgomale, *Coins, Medals and Seals of the Shahs of Iran (1500-1941)*, 1945, p. 24.

¹⁷ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, Vol. II, Eng. Tr. by H. Beveridge, Cal. 1912, p. 401.

¹⁸ Father Monserrate, *Commentary*, edited by S. N. Banerjee and J. S. Hoyland, p. 209.

¹⁹ Ibn Hasan, *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, 1936, p. 101.

²⁰ Shah Nawaz Khan, *Maasirul Umara*, Cal., 1888, I. p. 685.

²¹ Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, Eng. Tr. by A. Rogers, London, 1909, p. 18.

Sahib (perhaps Jahan Ara) who retained the seal and the duty of sealing the *farmans* till the end of the reign.²² The limited scope of this article does not permit multiplication of examples. It is, however, certain that under the great Mughals the *uzuk* seal generally remained in the female apartment.

Methods of attachment—We may conclude this study with a discussion of the method of attachment. In the case of *tamra-sasana* (records on copper covering more than one plate) it was customary to string the plates together by one or two copper rings passing through round holes in them. A bronze reproduction of the royal seal was attached at the point where the two ends of the ring met. In the case of records on single plates, it was customary to weld or otherwise fasten the seals on to the plates themselves—sometimes on the left side before the lines of the inscription and sometimes at the top.²³ In case of documents on paper, various methods of attachment were adopted. One method was as follows: At one end of the document a strip of stiff paper was attached, and a small portion of it near the edge was cut separating it from the rest of the strip. The seal was affixed to this small portion with impressions on both sides and looked like a modified version of the pendent seal. In most cases the seal was put *en placard*—that is, the seal was impressed directly on the face of the document. Abul Fazl informs us that the royal seal was affixed on the *farmans*. *Farmans*, *parwanchas* and *barats* were rolled up from the bottom into several folds and sealed at prescribed places by various officials from the *vazir* downwards. The two edges of the document were made to meet and a knot of paper was put over them. The seal was affixed on the knot in such a manner that the contents could not be seen. When thus sealed the *farman* was put into a golden cover.²⁴

The *kharita* or diplomatic bag generally served as a receptacle for documents. The mouth of the *kharita* was tied with coloured strings and a seal was affixed thereon. This proves that seals in medieval India were used to authenticate a document or close it. In most cases, however, the seal was used to authenticate a document which was not closed. The Germans have adopted the term *untersiegeln* for this method of attachment. Sometimes the seal was employed to authenticate as well

²² Abdul Hamid Lahori, *Badshah Nama*, Bib. Ind. I. p. 406.

²³ *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 32.

²⁴ Abul Fazl, *Ain*, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-74.

as to close a document so as to protect it from being read by any one except the person to whom it was addressed. In German this method is called *versiegeln*.

A. I. TIRMIZI

Information about medieval Indian seals will be welcomed by the author who is working on Mughal **sigillography**.

BIRCH-BARK (BHURJAPATRA) AND CLAY-COATED MANUSCRIPTS IN THE GILGIT COLLECTION—THEIR REPAIR AND PRESERVATION

The inner bark of birch and the palm leaf are the two most important materials which have been used in ancient India for writing purposes. While palm leaf manuscripts are found in abundance in East, West and Peninsular India, especially in old temples and monasteries, Northern India, particularly Kashmir, is the home of birch-bark manuscripts, and the reason is not difficult to find. The Himalayas contain an inexhaustible supply of birch-bark, and this is why in Kashmir and other hill countries this was used both instead of paper by the shopkeepers and for lining the roofs of houses in order to make them watertight. The bark of birch is impermeable to water, and very durable.

The National Archives of India had a unique opportunity of tackling the problem of their preservation—a problem which has not been very satisfactorily solved in any repository—Indian, European or American—when it was called upon to process the oldest manuscripts on birch-bark available in India. In October 1948, the Kashmir Government deposited in the National Archives of India a collection of manuscripts known as the Gilgit collection for rehabilitation and microfilming. The collection consisted of nearly 1,800 prepared sheets of the inner bark of the Himalayan birch (*Betula Bhojpattra*) and was in a very poor condition of preservation. The sheets varied in size from 27.2" x 5" to 9" x 2". They were in flattened condition. The lines run always parallel to the broad side of the bark in imitation of the writing on palm leaves. The ink seemed to be of two different types. One was steady and stood wash. It probably conforms to the formula described by Bühler according to whom the ink used in birch-bark manuscripts was made by converting almonds into charcoal and boiling the coal thus obtained with *gomutra* (*urin bovis*). The ink thus obtained is believed as not being affected either by damp or water. The other type of ink could hardly be washed without being abraded or smudged. On microscopic and microchemical analyses it was found that the ink used in the case of all these manuscripts was no doubt carbonaceous in nature, but it was doubtful if the ink

In all cases conformed to Bühler's formula. The writing was, however, bright in all the manuscripts excepting a few in which the ink had lost its black brilliance owing to the deposition of dust. The brilliance was restored by cleaning the manuscript sheets with soft dry linen or with a cotton swab moistened with acetone. The sheets themselves were impervious to water and it required at least 24 hours to completely humidify them. Dry heat, the greatest enemy of the leaves, had caused many of them to crack, split and peel in all directions and many of the leaves had become fragmentary.

In many of these manuscripts writing is a variant of the Brahmi script, analogous to that found in the manuscript remains excavated at ruined Buddhist sites in Chinese Turkestan. Others show an early form of the Brahmi writing known in Kashmir as "Sharada" and once prevailing all through the hill tracts in the extreme north-west of India. The palaeographic indications suggest that some of them may date back to the sixth century A.D., if not earlier. The structural characteristics of the stupas within which large deposits of sacred manuscripts etc., used to be preserved and the dry climate of the region have contributed much to the preservation of these manuscripts, which would otherwise have been damaged beyond restoration.

The question of installation of a laminating machine for the lamination of records of the Government of India was finally settled by this time, and initially it was more or less taken for granted that the birch-bark sheets could be conveniently laminated. But further examination of the question and the extremely brittle condition of the birch-bark leaves occasioned doubts whether it would be at all advisable to subject them to the heat and pressure required for lamination. The texture of the barks and the presence of undulations in and around the knots in them were such as to render extremely problematic the uniform distribution of pressure on the bark sheets and consequent absorption by them of cellulose acetate when rendered plastic by the heat of the press. These considerations impressed on us the need for making enquiries from those institutions and repositories in Europe and elsewhere which might have had actual experience of handling birch-bark or similar material.

The replies received from experts to our enquiries may be classified as follows:

- (1) One suggestion was that the birch-barks could be mounted between two sheets of glass like papyrus leaves after separating

the stuck-up manuscript sheets by the method adopted for papyri separation.

The Bodleian Library explained the method which they had adopted for the well known "Bakhshali" birch-bark manuscript in their custody. Each leaf of the manuscript was placed inside a mica envelope which was then mounted (detachably) in a card-board frame such as would both keep the envelopes rigid and prevent them from rubbing against or being pressed by each other. But the Keeper of the Library was doubtful about the suitability of the method as mica, cellophane and other similar substances tend, in course of time, to discolour and crack. They also lack the rigidity desirable for preserving fragile materials. He also explained the method of glass mounting with the addition of a shaped card-board mount placed on the edges of the glass round the document, the glass pieces then being bound with *passe-partout*.

(2) Another recommendation was that they should be strengthened by impregnation in celluloid dissolved in equal quantities of acetone and amyl acetate. The celluloid solution might be applied once, twice or oftener according to the state of the birch-bark leaves.

An analogous process of spraying the birch-bark folios with a lacquer compound was also suggested. It was thought that the use of a relatively dry spray might do away with the difficulty encountered with the running of the ink.

(3) Third line of treatment suggested was to impregnate the sheets of bark with a material which would tend to keep them soft, retain any water which is held chemically by the fibre, and make them manageable for handling. Since most barks contain a small quantity of wax and at least a trace of resin, a mixture of these materials with the wax (overwhelmingly predominant) should do.

(4) Like papyrus, the layers of birch-bark are laminated together by a natural adhesive found originally in the fresh specimens. The adhesive keeps the layers stuck together just by pressure when they are fresh. So it was suggested that if an extract of the birch-bark could be used for humidifying them, that would not only laminate the layers in each leaf out would also go a long way in removing their brittleness which is attributable to evaporation of the natural volatile oil present in the birch-bark.

(5) Yet another recommendation was that the sheets should be got into order for mounting in a guard book. The first stage is to place each sheet between two pieces of an openwork silk tissue longer than the document, sticking the edges with freshly made flour paste and when dry cutting the excess with scissors. A word of warning was, however, given that the gauze should not stick to the bark save at the edges. In short, the mounting method was suggested.

Before discussing the practicability of the above methods, it would be necessary to have some idea about the nature of the problem faced by the National Archives. The problem varied from locating lacunae caused by the flaking of the top layers of a number of sheets to substituting the missing portions of some other sheets with hand-made paper or processed birch-bark of appropriate thickness. There were also fragmentary stray pieces which had to be restored to the relevant sheets. Another problem encountered was that in some cases the sheets had got stuck along the writing and it was probably the gum in the ink which made them so. The layers of bark, as already stated, are impervious to water and so the exposure to damp created by a "Pettifogger Humidifier" could not help in softening the sheets for their subsequent separation. The separation methods suggested above were applied in some of the cases in which the ink was more or less of a permanent nature, but the impervious nature of the bark sheets rendered all attempts ineffective. Any attempt to separate the dry leaves by means of horn slices only resulted in peeling off the surface layer. The hot oil method of separating the leaves as suggested by Filliozat¹ could not be attempted as it was feared that the ink in some of the manuscripts was of an impermanent nature and would get smudged or washed out in such a process. A laborious process ultimately helped. The leaves were gradually exposed to steam generated in a boiler and then separated by means of horn slices.

As to repair of the manuscripts, trials and experiments continued to be carried out in the National Archives of India to find the most satisfactory and practical method of renovating them. The suggestions made by foreign experts were all based on theoretical knowledge, none having had first hand experience with birch-bark. Some of the suggestions had possibilities and were given a trial.

¹ "Manuscript on Birch-Bark (*Bhurjapatra*) and their Preservation", *The Indian Archives*, Vol. I, no. 2, April 1947.

The first suggestion, i.e., framing between two glass sheets was hardly practicable as nearly two thousand sheets were to be processed. In addition, the fragmentary pieces had to be re-constituted and fixed up somehow before framing. It was also doubtful if remedy No. 2 suggested above could be of any practical use. First, the leaves were not likely to absorb the plastic solution and the utmost that could be achieved was an exterior coating which would not have any organic relation with the leaves. Secondly, the coating would be of little use where a leaf had broken into fragments.

Suggestions at (3) and (4) above seemed to be very helpful though they left unsolved the problem of joining together the broken fragments of the leaves. The suggestion at (5) was not followed up, as the warning that the gauze was not to be stuck to the bark save at the edges or where it was used especially to patch cracks or lacuna in the text, discouraged experimentation for fear that any such accidental sticking might cause lasting bad effects. Moreover, the leaves being very brittle, the handling and use of the repaired manuscript sheets would become difficult unless some method of keeping the gauze stuck to the bark was developed. It was also felt that the layers of barks in the sheets being loose in many cases, the above method would not give sufficient protection to the individual layers.

As none of the recommendations detailed above solved satisfactorily all the problems posed by this huge collection of Gilgit manuscripts, an experiment with the chiffoning process was undertaken. A few sheets were repaired with chiffon gauze and flour paste in the same manner as paper manuscripts are repaired. The repaired sheets were allowed to dry but not fully and kept under pressure between glass-pieces when almost dry. The result seemed to be quite satisfactory. It was found that the flakes of the top layers of the bark which had come out almost wholly from the barks got very nicely stuck to the next layer, the paste entering the layers through the torn and broken places etc., in the normal course. No attempt was made to apply paste to the inner layers, for in that process not only would the writings be endangered but also the layers which were partially stuck by the natural resinous matter of the bark would get relatively displaced, thereby affecting the very form of the manuscript sheets. The fragments could be joined with the main body of the leaves by simply placing them in their positions in the sheets and pasting with chiffon. The missing portions were,

however, filled with hand-made paper of appropriate thickness and then pasted, the required thickness of hand-made paper being achieved by pasting to it two or three layers of paper.

The process of repair thus evolved strengthened the outer layers of the sheets and at the same time took care of the inner layer and sandwiched all the layers together into a whole sheet. Good flour paste prepared with the addition of saffrol, oil of cloves, white arsenic and a small quantity of glycerine was used for silking purpose. It was observed that the flexibility and appearance of the repaired sheets improved considerably with the addition of glycerine.

In this collection there were, however, a number of clay-coated manuscripts* which could not be repaired by the above method. The manuscript sheets were very much damaged owing to bad storage or handling and the very nature of the material with which they were coated made them more vulnerable than the birch-bark manuscripts. The coating was a thick mass of clay, perhaps gypsum, whose incidence per unit area was very much higher compared to the bast fibres contained in that area, and as such it did not have much strength to keep the whole sheet together. The writing characters were, however, bright and the ink used was carbonaceous. Application of flour paste on the manuscript sheets discoloured the clay and made the sheets wet in the same way as old art paper is affected by water. In the National Archives of India, a number of palm leaf manuscripts had been very successfully repaired earlier by applying on them a plastic paste made by dissolving acetate foils in acetone which is chemically inert and then covering the wet pasted surface with silk gauze or acetate foils. A small hand roller was used in fixing the silk gauge or the acetate sheet to the surface of the pasted sheet. It was felt that the same method could be effectively used in repairing the clay-coated manuscripts. The application of the plastic paste and the immediate covering of the manuscript sheets with silk gauge or acetate foils required considerable manipulation and still the result was not perfect as the application of paste could not be made uniform. While tackling the problem, Shri O. P. Goel of the Department found that uniform application of the plastic paste could be achieved if acetone in small quantities was applied with a cotton swab on a sandwich containing a document between chiffon and

* These were written on sheets made of bast fibres heavily coated with clay.

acetate foil on both sides in the order: chiffon, acetate foil, document, acetate foil and chiffon. A major portion of the clay-coated manuscripts were thus repaired by using chiffon instead of tissue paper. Subsequently, the use of chiffon was done away with and the documents were framed in hand-made paper with acetate foil pasted with venyle acetate.

More than nine years have passed since the Gilgit manuscripts on birch-bark and the clay-coated manuscripts were repaired. In order to assess the effect of time and storage conditions on the repaired manuscripts they were kept under constant observation. The manuscripts were kept in a steel cabinet wrapped with paper and tied between pieces of board of manuscript size. The room was not air-conditioned nor was there any special arrangement for ventilation and humidity control. It has been observed that the chiffon of the repaired sheets has turned slightly yellow. The colour of the manuscript sheet and the hand-made paper used in filling the missing portion of the sheets is unaffected. The flexibility of the sheets remains as good as when freshly repaired. The repair effected in the birch-bark sheets could be very easily undone by moistening the repaired surface with a cotton swab containing water. A clay-coated manuscript sheet was de-laminated in an acetone bath without any difficulty. On de-laminated clay-coated sheets it was observed that the strength and bond of the surface clay of the sheets had much increased and acetate foil which with acetone worked like a sizing to the clay left a fine plastic coating on the surface of the sheets. That the de-lamination of clay-coated sheets in an acetone bath presents no difficulty speaks eloquently of the efficacy of the method of repair adopted. The method not only arrested further powdering of the clay, but also strengthened it considerably.

The method of repair of birch-bark as described above was applied to the rehabilitation of a number of codices birch-bark which had not only become very brittle and fragile but had also completely lost their binding. After repair, the sheets were guarded with hand-made paper, gathered, sewn and bound into volumes.

Preservation of birch-bark manuscripts no longer presents insurmountable problems. Most of the manuscripts which have come from Central Asia are in excellent condition and on this point it has already been stressed that not only the climate of Central Asia but also the method of storage in stupas has

contributed greatly to the present state of preservation of birch-bark. The worst enemy of birch-bark is dampness, on account of which their outer layers which are very thin often get stuck when the manuscript is kept tied like palm leaf manuscripts. The sticking, it is felt, is due more to ink than to any other reason. The joining of the frayed and torn edges of bark sheets with added strips of good quality hand-made paper of appropriate thickness or even with processed bark of birch adds much to their strength, while their flexibility is not impaired. Use of glass for preserving birch-bark sheets is not feasible when a large number of sheets are involved. Moreover, it is doubtful if that will be an ideal process. The best method seems to preserve the sheets flat and tied between two pieces of wood or mill boards in the manner palm leaf manuscripts are generally preserved.

It has been observed that not a single sheet of the collection of birch-bark manuscripts has been damaged by insects. An examination of the fibre contents of birch-bark was undertaken in the National Archives of India and it has been found by alcohol-benzene extraction method that raw birch-bark contains 15 to 20 per cent. of solid material which is a mixture of methyl salicylate, tannin and wax. The extreme resistivity to damage by insects is attributable to the presence of methyl salicylate. In this connection it will be interesting to note that birch oil which contains methyl salicylate as one of its important constituents is extensively used as a disinfectant and for leather dressing.

An air-conditioned vault will, no doubt, offer the best storage condition for the preservation of birch-bark manuscripts, but the Gilgit collection repaired in 1949-50 and kept in stack where the temperature and humidity varied from 45° F. to 110° F. and 5 per cent. to 95 per cent. respectively were in excellent condition. Excepting that the chiffon had turned slightly yellow, there was no sign of any harmful effect of the repair method adopted. In fact the whole collection seemed to have acquired more grace and beauty than when originally brought to the Archives ten years ago.

P. C. MAJUMDAR

NEWS NOTES

INDIA

The National Archives of India

The collection of records in the National Archives of India showed a substantial increase during the year under review. The new accessions were records of: Foreign and Political Department, 1931-45; Department of Commerce, 1933; Finance Department; late Rajputana Agency; Central India Agency and Eastern States Agency, 1898-1947. The Department also received 122 authenticated copies of Bills from Part A, B and C States, assented to by the President. Besides, 32 documents relating to the Directorate of Audit (Indian accounts in U.K.) bearing the signatures of Queen Victoria, King Edward VII and King George V as well as of such eminent British statesmen as Gladstone, Disraeli, Asquith etc., were acquired. The cartographic acquisitions include five Survey of India maps comprising 10 sheets. Among the Persian manuscripts purchased during the year, special mention may be made of *Mirat-al-Ahwal-i-Jahan Numa*, transcribed in 1819-20 A.D., and 8 *parwanas* belonging to the time of Emperors Aurangzeb and Muhammad Shah and Nawabs Amjad Ali Shah and Wajid Ali Shah making grants of land to certain individuals and an original letter of Raja Man Singh of Ayodhia to Mir Zakir Hussain, requesting for some masons. *Mirat-al-Ahwal-i-Jahan Numa*, written early in the eighteenth century by Muhammad Bakir-ul-Isfahani contains the family history and memoirs of the author who travelled extensively in India. It includes an account of the wars of Daulat Rao Sindia and Jaswant Rao Holkar.

Owing to the foreign exchange difficulties, the Department's programme of acquiring microfilm copies of records of Indian interest from abroad, came almost to a standstill. The only significant acquisition under this head during the year was a micro-copy of the correspondence of the agents of Nana Sahib with the French authorities at Chandernagore in 1857 available at the Archives of the Ministry of External Affairs of France. These letters requesting Napoleon III to arbitrate between the English and the mutineers contain a detailed analysis of the causes of the uprising.

Thirty-four original letters of Mahatma Gandhi written during the Champaran Struggle in 1917 were gifted to the National Archives by the Government of Bihar.

The National Archives Library acquired 4,610 books and periodicals by purchase, exchange and gift. These include publications on archive-keeping, modern Indian history and allied subjects.

The publication programme of the Department made steady progress during the period. Volume II of the *Fort William-India House* series was published and issued for sale while the printing of volumes I, IX and XIII made good progress. Another in the series, volume VI, was sent to the press. The printing of the *Index to the Records of the Foreign and Political Department* (1756-80), volume I, was completed and that of the *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, volume X neared completion.

Under the National Archives Fellowships Scheme for encouraging research on records relating to modern Indian history, three scholars completed their work in 1956 and another scholar finished his work during the year under report. This scheme which was launched in 1954 showed a few defects in actual working. The Department, therefore, submitted a proposal to the Government of India suggesting certain modifications in it in order to ensure a more intensive study of original records.

The four candidates admitted to the One Year Diploma Course in the beginning of the year successfully completed their training. The Department also conducted as usual two short-term courses of training, each of three months' duration, attended by 16 nominees from various Departments of the Government of India and the States.

The National Archives participated in the exhibition of relics and documentary material relating to the Rising of 1857 held at the National Museum, New Delhi, from 22 August to 15 September 1957. The original documents, photographs and maps displayed by it at the exhibition attracted great public interest. At the exhibition organised by the Lok Sabha Secretariat in March 1957, several documents depicting the history of the Indian Parliament were displayed.

The Bhopal Branch of the National Archives of India continued the programme of taking over the records from the erstwhile Central Records Office, Bhopal. About 762 bundles of records mostly pertaining to the Political Department were

brought over. The Office started preparing a *Hand-list of Mutiny Papers*.

Indian Historical Records Commission

The five-year term of the members of the Indian Historical Records Commission expired on 31 March 1957. The question of reconstitution of the Commission was taken up with the Government of India. Pending the reconstitution, no session could be held during the year under review.

The Secretary, Indian Historical Records Commission, was appointed a member of the Education Sub-Commission of the reconstituted Indian National Commission for cooperation with UNESCO for a fresh term of 3 years.

National Committee of Archivists

The sixth meeting of the National Committee of Archivists was held on 15-16 January 1957 at the National Archives of India, New Delhi, with Shri V. S. Suri, Keeper of Records, Punjab Government, in the chair. Technical problems relating to the preservation of archives once again figured prominently in the meeting. The result of experiments conducted by the National Archives of India on the use of Japanese tissue paper and chiffon with cellulose acetate foil and acetone for the repair of old documents and birch-bark manuscripts was placed before the members who evinced keen interest in the process. The Committee discussed the question of standardisation of indexing rules for the use of the archives repositories all over India. In view of the complexity of the problem, a sub-committee was set up with Dr. B. S. Baliga, Curator, Madras Record Office, as the chairman with Mr. V. S. Suri and Dr. P. M. Joshi as members, and Dr. B. A. Saletore as its convener to consider it in all its bearing. This sub-committee met at Madras Record Office on 22 July 1957. The chairman placed before the members some of the indexes prepared by the Madras Government and a set of indexing rules as given in the Madras Government Secretariat Manual. It was generally felt, however, that it would be impossible to lay down standardised subject headings which would be suitable for all records, and that the various Government departments and the Keepers of records should be left free to select their own subject headings according to their special requirements.

At the seventh meeting of the National Committee of Archivists which was held at the Madras Record Office on 23-24

July 1957 with Mr. R. C. Gupta, Acting Director of Archives, Government of India, in the chair, the question of the reconstitution of the National Committee of Archivists in view of the reorganisation of States, came up for consideration and it was decided that since Hyderabad and PEPSU had merged in Andhra and Punjab respectively, their separate membership should cease. Other important subjects discussed at the meeting were: control of white-ant menace in Record offices; humidity control in Record offices; air-conditioning of the muniment rooms of the National Archives of India; and binding of laminated documents.

Local Records Sub-Committee

The 15th meeting of the Local Records Sub-Committee, an adjunct of the Indian Historical Records Commission, was held on 22 January 1957 in New Delhi. Shri K. G. Saiyidain, Educational Adviser to the Government of India, the *ex-officio* Chairman of the Committee, presided. The members present were, Dr. Bisheshwar Prasad, Director, Inter-Services Historical Division, Ministry of Defence, Shri S. C. Bhatnagar, Ministry of Finance, Shri S. Srinivasan, Under Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri R. Rajaratnam, Assistant Estate Officer, and Dr. B. A. Saletore, Director of Archives, National Archives of India (Secretary).

The Committee took a serious view of the large number of records not returned for years by the various Ministries and Departments of the Government of India who had requisitioned them. As this could result in irretrievable losses, the National Archives was requested to press for their regular return and in the case of non-compliance, to make a reference to the O. & M. Officer of the defaulting Ministry or Department for urgent necessary action. The question of weeding of records next came up for discussion. In view of the fact that the Ministry of Education weeding rules and those incorporated in the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure were at variance, a sub-committee consisting of a representative each of the O. & M. Directorate, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Law, and the Director of Archives, was formed to consider in detail the problem and make necessary recommendations for the consideration of the Government. Establishment of regional record depositories of the National Archives of India for the preservation of the non-current records of the Government of India produced by its agencies in the various parts of the country was agreed to in principle and it was suggested that a scheme to that

effect be worked out. Finally, in view of the unsatisfactory state of preservation of the non-current records of the Union territories, it was proposed that the jurisdiction of the Director of Archives should extend over their record rooms, to ensure proper care of records.

National Register of Records and Historical Manuscripts

The proposal to compile a National Register of Records incorporating in it the entire archival wealth of the country—public, semi-public, local, institutional, private etc., was recommended by the Research and Publication Committee as well as the Indian Historical Records Commission as early as March 1947. The proposal, though accepted by the Government of India, in principle could not be implemented due to financial reasons. But realising the imperative need of compiling such a register, the Government of India informed all the State Governments in May 1957 about its decision to confine the scheme for the present to records in private custody only and invited the co-operation of the State Regional Records Survey Committees and other local bodies already engaged in similar work. A beginning has been made by listing the documents acquired either by purchase or gift by the former *ad hoc* Regional Records Survey Committees, and the National Archives of India.

The Historical Records Bill, 1957

The Historical Records (of National Importance) Bill, 1957 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha by Dr. Raghubir Singh. Some of its main features are: (i) the Director of Archives shall have the custody of all records that are, or may from time to time be declared by the Parliament to be of national importance. He will not only ensure their proper preservation but also make rules for their efficient management; (ii) the Director shall receive in his custody, the accumulating non-current records of the Government of India, and of the Parliament, any historical records that may be purchased or otherwise acquired by the Government of India for being preserved, and records belonging to any State or private owner, either deposited or gifted to the National Archives of India; (iii) the Director with the approval of the Indian Historical Records Commission should make rules respecting the disposal by destruction or otherwise of documents which are in his custody. No document older than the year 1818 A.D. can, however, be destroyed. He shall cause a schedule to be prepared of all the documents proposed to be

disposed of or returned, containing such particulars as to their character and content as may be necessary to enable the Houses of Parliament to judge of the expediency of the steps recommended.

Inter-University Board of India, Burma and Ceylon

The 33rd annual session of the Inter-University Board of India, Burma and Ceylon was held at Perideniya (Ceylon) in December 1957. A resolution moved by the National Archives of India and accepted by the Board was to the effect that "edited texts or calendars of unpublished manuscript records or documents, when accompanied by adequate introductions and critical apparatus should be given the same recognition as original dissertations on arts or science subjects and should be regarded as worthy of consideration for the award of a Doctorate degree". A similar resolution is expected to be placed before the next session of the Indian Historical Records Commission for their consideration.

Assam

Dr. S. K. Bhuyan, Director, and Dr. P. C. Choudhury, Deputy Director of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Gauhati, have been appointed Chairman and *ex-officio* Secretary respectively of the Regional Records Survey Committee.

The plan of work along with financial implications drawn up by the Committee at its first meeting held on 21 December 1956 was sanctioned by the State Government in August 1957. Scholars of repute are expected to be deputed to the District and Sub-Divisional headquarters and other important places with a view to examine and acquire important records and manuscript collections on the spot. The Committee has recommended that such records should be temporarily deposited at the Office of the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies for examination and report before their final transmission to the Assam Secretariat Record Office for preservation.

The reconstituted Committee began its actual work from September 1957 when at a meeting on 17 September 1957, it drew up a detailed plan of survey work in the State. For the present the record offices at the district headquarters at Gauhati and Dhubri are to be examined.

Bombay

The work of weeding the records of ephemeral value was taken up in right earnest at the Secretariat Record Office,

Bombay. Over 200 files of the Political and Services Department, 230 files of the Home Department and 2,000 files of the Revenue Department, were received for appraisal and evaluation. After careful scrutiny, advice was given to the Departments concerned for preservation of the files considered worthy of permanent retention which would be deposited in the Record office eventually.

Apart from the usual accessions of non-current records of the Bombay Government during the year, microfilms of Indexes to the Bombay Military Department records available at the National Archives of India were acquired. Microfilm copies of records of Indian interest were also acquired from the India Office Library, London; Algemeen Rijksarchief, the Hague; Bodleian Library, Oxford; Lambeth Palace Library and Guildhall Library, London. These acquisitions include copies of some interesting 17th century water-colour paintings of towns and Dutch factories in Western India preserved in the Hague archives and two manuscript tracts in the Bodleian collection relating to arguments in favour of and against the import of Indian wares into England. Printing of the *Historical Genealogies* in Marathi compiled by Dr. G. S. Sardesai was completed.

Alienation Office, Poona

The important acquisitions of the Alienation Office, Poona, consist of three reels of microfilms of manuscripts of Saint Tukaram obtained from Pandharpur Samshodhan Mandal and some records dealing with medical subjects received from the Director of Local Authorities, Central Division, Poona.

Baroda Record Office

The work of shifting the Secretariat records of the erstwhile State to the main record room of the Baroda Record Office was continued. Further, 605 bundles of village records were brought from the Sarkarwada room.

Kolhapur Record Office

Eight *rumals* of Himmat Bahadur Jagir and 6 *rumals* of Sarlaskar were acquired from the Collector of Kolhapur in May 1956. These records date from 1798 to 1881 and pertain to village accounts.

State Board for Historical Records and Ancient Monuments

Due to the reorganisation of the State of Bombay, the term of the State Board which expired on 20 February 1956, was extended by a period of one year.

The Standing Committee of the Board met on 6 August 1956 with Mahamahopadhyaya D. V. Potdar in the chair. It approved the publication programme of the Board which envisages publication of Persian sources of the Deccan medieval history such as *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, *Futuhāt-i-Adilshahi*, a small book on the sources of medieval Deccan history (1300 to 1686 A.D.) with notes, annotations etc., and a Marathi edition of *Basatin-us-Salatin*.

The Board was reconstituted on 31 July 1957 with the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Education Department, as *ex-officio* President and the Director of Archives and Historical Monuments as *ex-officio* Secretary.

The first meeting of the reconstituted Board was held in Bombay on 16 October 1957. Four Survey Committees, one each for manuscripts and records, for exploration, for monuments, and for epigraphy—were proposed to be constituted with outside experts co-opted on each Committee, their number not exceeding that of the members of the Board on the Committee concerned. Shri Kanole's proposal for publication of historical records in Marathwada area was sent for consideration to the new Standing Committee, consisting of Prof. D. V. Potdar, Dr. H. D. Sankalia, Dr. Moti Chandra, Dr. M. R. Majumdar, and Dr. P. M. Joshi.

Jammu and Kashmir

The Regional Records Survey Committee was able to locate several collections of ancient manuscripts and rare printed publications in Sanskrit, Sharda, Hindi, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English and Kashmiri relating to varied subjects like history, religion, philosophy, grammar, art, medicine, military science, agriculture, etc. It has not been possible for the Committee to acquire any of these manuscripts due to shortage of funds.

The Committee was reconstituted with Mr. G. A. Mukhtar, Director of Education, as *ex-officio* Chairman and Mr. F. M. Husnain, Director of Records, as *ex-officio* Secretary.

Orissa

The term of membership of the non-official members of the Orissa Regional Records Survey Committee expired in January

1957 but it was extended till 31 March 1958. In the meantime, a proposal for the reconstitution of the Committee has been placed before the Government.

Punjab

In pursuance of the Punjab Government Record Office scheme of surveying the records at the district and divisional levels, 14 volumes of records of British Agencies in the Punjab pertaining to the period 1823-46 were acquired from the Deputy Commissioner's Office at Ludhiana. A large number of old and rare publications of historical interest was also acquired from the offices of the Deputy Commissioners of Gurdaspur and Ludhiana for the reference library attached to the State Record Office.

Bihar

The Bihar Regional Records Survey Committee continued with success its efforts to locate fresh material throwing light on the different aspects of the history of Bihar. In May 1957, Prof. S. H. Askari and Mr. Q. Ahmad visited Aurangabad (Gaya District), and examined a collection of manuscripts belonging to Maulvi Abdul Rauf of the local Government H. E. School. Some of these manuscripts describe the political condition of Bihar during the late 18th and 19th centuries. While at Aurangabad, they were informed that the neighbouring places like Deova, Danknagar, Amjhar, Amthna and Shamsdernagar were rich in manuscript *farmans*, inscriptional stones, etc. The books and manuscript collections belonging to Mr. Munnu Khan and Shah Najmuddin Saheb of Bihar Sharif were also inspected. Several interesting manuscripts like *Dastur-ul-Insha*, *Insha-i-Madhu Ram* were found in the library of the former. There is also a very fine collection of *waslis* (calligraphy) of considerable antiquity and historical importance. Quite a few of the *waslis* are by Imad-al-Hasni, Nurullah and Ali Tabrezi, noted calligraphists of the Mughal period.

Kerala

The scope of the Regional Records Survey Committee of Travancore and Cochin constituted in 1951 expanded consequent upon the formation of the newly constituted State of Kerala in 1956. The work of collecting materials for the compilation of the history of the freedom movement was continued. The Committee submitted to the State Government detailed

proposals for undertaking a publication programme which includes: (i) Regional Bibliography, (ii) History of Freedom Movement, and (iii) a separate history of Kerala from the early period till the present day.

Rajasthan

The work of the Rajasthan Archives Department is being carried on through its 14 centres established throughout Rajasthan. The pre-1900 records taken over from the former repositories include *Farmans* and *Nishans*, 1622-1711, *Akhbarat*, 1666-1719, *Vakils'* reports, 1657-1719, *Kharitas*, 1750-1950, *Roznamcha*, 1675-1854, correspondence regarding Shivaji, 1665-1744, *Pindaris'* letters, etc. Several documents of great historical importance have been salvaged from Jaipur, Jodhpur, Indergarh and other places. Among these mention may be made of documents throwing light on the construction by Jai Singh of Jai Mahal, Red Fort and observatories, Persian documents in the shape of *farmans* of Ahmad Shah Durrani and Mughal Emperors and some 15 documents throwing light on the revenue administration of Akbar.

A Regional Records Survey Committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister, Government of Rajasthan, with the Director of Archives as the Secretary, has been formed in Rajasthan. As a result of the appeal issued by the Committee, Shri Sangram Singhji Mehta of Udaipur, a descendant of the renowned family of Musahib-i-alas of Mewar has generously offered to donate his family papers to the Committee. The papers range from 1806 to 1951 and contain copies of *pattus* and *parwanas* issued by the Maharana of Mewar from time to time. Besides, they also include *kharitas* of the various rulers of the former States addressed to the Maharanas of Mewar, reports of the *harkaras*, correspondence of European officers, especially of the renowned historian and diplomat Col. James Tod, and certain agreements concluded with *jagirdars*, *patels*, *patwaris*, etc.

Uttar Pradesh

The Central Record Office, Allahabad, was declared a permanent department of the U. P. Government with effect from 1 April 1956. The records of district and divisional offices continued to be accessioned in the office but due to shortage of storage space the programme had to be considerably curtailed.

The eleventh meeting of the U. P. Regional Records Survey Committee was held at the Central Record Office, Allahabad,

on 4 December 1956 with Dr. B. P. Saksena in the chair. The Committee deputed Dr. Saksena and Dr. A. L. Srivastava to visit Rewa for examining and evaluating certain records relating to Tantya Tope which were offered for sale by their owner, Faujdar Abdul Majid Khan.

Madras

The transfer of the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library to the Madras Record Office, which had been kept in abeyance due to lack of space, was made possible during the year by the shifting of the office of the State Transport Authority from the building.

Fresh accessions of the Madras Record Office consist of the records of several Departments of the Secretariat for 1953. Besides, the proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue and Settlement), the Court of Wards, the Chief Conservator of Forests and the Irrigation Development Board and Electoral Rolls for 1956, of 48 assembly constituencies were also received for custody.

Of the two volumes of the *Records of Fort St. George* series which had been made ready, printing of one is nearing completion and the other is in the press. The work of preparing District Handbooks in place of the old District Gazetteers was continued. The Tanjore District Handbook was issued in July 1957 and the Madurai District Handbook was under print. Manuscripts of South Arcot and Coimbatore District Handbooks were made ready. Further, it has been decided to reprint for the benefit of the general public the two volumes of *Studies in Madras Administration*.

The Madras Regional Records Survey Committee met twice during the year, once in March 1957 and again in August 1957. In an endeavour to enlist the cooperation of learned institutions Shri M. P. Periaswami Thooran, Chief Editor, *Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam* and Shri S. A. Govindarajan, President, South Indian Journalists Federation, were co-opted as members. The Government Epigraphist brought to the notice of the Committee the existence of a considerable volume of correspondence and notes left behind by his predecessors, mostly foreign scholars. It was suggested that the material be examined as it was likely to throw considerable light on the cultural history of the country.

A proposal to form District Committees to assist the Regional Committee in unearthing records and manuscripts was mooted at the meeting. The proposed District Committees are to include

the Collector of the district concerned as chairman and a few other members, including the member of the Regional Committee, if any, from the district concerned.

INTERNATIONAL

International Vocabulary of Archives

As a result of a resolution of the Second International Congress on Archives, an International Committee on Archival Terminology with representatives from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom was set up in 1954. At its meeting held on 24 September 1956 at Florence, the Committee examined some drafts prepared by the countries represented on the Committee to standardise the utilization of technical words in each linguistic zone. The Vocabulary is expected to cover historical as well as modern administrative documents. To begin with, only the five languages of the Council will be included.

The International Committee adopted the following main groups in which the National Committees should arrange the various terms:

- (1) archival structure and general principles of arrangement;
- (2) types of documents: (a) physical aspect, (b) archival nature of documents;
- (3) technical operations;
- (4) preservation of archives (equipment and restoration);
- (5) working tools (archives in formation and already constituted);
- (6) use of archives and documentary reproduction.

Centre for Preservation of Cultural Property, Rome

An international centre under the auspices of UNESCO for the study of the preservation and restoration of cultural property is expected to be established at Rome shortly. Any UNESCO Member-State can become a member by contributing to its funds. Its functions will be: (a) to collect, study and circulate documentation concerning the scientific and technical problems of the preservation and restoration of cultural property; (b) to co-ordinate, stimulate or institute research in this domain, in particular, by means of commissions to bodies or experts, international meetings, publications and exchanges of specialists; (c) to give advice and make recommendations on general or specific points connected with the preservation and restoration of cultural property; (d) to assist in training research workers and technicians and in raising the standard of restoration work.

The centre will be situated in one of the buildings of the Istituto Centrale del Restauro and will have free access to archives and libraries of the specialized institutions in Rome whose work is related to cultural property.

UNESCO Mobile Microfilm Unit

The General Conference of UNESCO held in Montevideo in 1954, recommended the formation of a UNESCO free mobile microfilm unit for the use of Member-States. The unit consists of two microfilm cameras, one Microfrance and one Kodagraph, a Lumoprint developing, fixing and washing set of three baths, a Griscombe microfilm reader, an apparatus for drying lengths of films up to 30 meters, and numerous accessories.

The main object of the scheme is to give to all countries, and particularly those whose resources are limited, an opportunity of making microfilm copies of the most valuable papers, documents of great historical value, rare engravings, maps and drawings, etc., in their possession.

Conference on Classification for Information Retrieval

An International Study Conference on Classification was held jointly by the International Federation for Documentation, ASLIB, the University of London School of Librarianship and Archives and the Classification Research Group, London (which is composed of a few interested persons) near Dorking, England, from 13 to 17 May 1957. It was attended by 35 experts representing England, France, German Federal Republic, the Netherlands, the U.S.A. and India. Interesting discussions took place on techniques for constructing classification schedules for a subject; problems encountered in the construction of a general classification; the question of notation in the classified index and the role of classification in mechanical selection.

UNITED KINGDOM

Committee on Departmental Records

By the end of 1956, 55 departments appointed Departmental Record Officers to plan the introduction of the new procedure recommended by the Committee on Departmental Records, for reviewing their records and selecting documents for preservation in the Public Record Office.

The recommendations of the Committee concerning the administration of the Public Record Office and the general management of the Public Records are to be incorporated in a

new legislation to be entitled Public Records Act, 1958. With the passing of this act, the Public Record Office Acts, 1898 and 1938 shall cease to have effect.

Public Record Office, London

The storage space at the Ashridge Repository was increased in 1956 by the insertion of additional shelves in the existing racking. Further, 1,800 foot-run of records of the various departments were received for safe custody. An acquisition worth a special mention during the year was a parchment volume of 123 membranes relating to the account of the clerk of the works of the King's Palace and Mews at Westminster and at the Tower of London during the first four years of the reign of King Edward II (1307-11). It is of exceptional interest in that it provides a wealth of detail relating to the rebuilding of the Palace of Westminster after it had been devastated by fire in the previous reign.

The Record Publications, issued during 1956, were the *Calendars of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry VII*, vol. III; *Close Rolls, Henry VII*, vol. I; *Papal Registers*, vol. XIII (Parts I and II, 1471-84); *Treasury Books*, vol. XXVII (Parts I and II) and vol. XXVIII (Part I); and *Treaty Rolls (1234-1325)*, vol. I.

Records Administration Division

Records Administration Division was constituted in accordance with the recommendation of the report of the Committee on Departmental Records. A staff of 4 Inspecting Officers under the Records Administration Officer was appointed to carry out the work of co-ordinating and supervising the arrangements by departments and other Government bodies for the new procedure, each Inspecting Officer being responsible for a group of departments.

As a result of the reorganisation of the Department, the management of the intermediate repositories at Hayes, Yeading and Leake Street was transferred to the Records Administration Division. By the end of the year 1956, the total foot-run of documents of the 33 participating Departments in the three repositories amounted to 5,93,500 feet, representing an increase of 21,500 feet.

Historical Manuscripts Commission

The Historical Manuscripts Commission met twice in July and in November 1956 at the Public Record Office, the Deputy Keeper of the Records being the Executive Commissioner.

The Commission continues to work through the National Register of Archives and arranges for the deposit of manuscripts in approved repositories. The *List of Accessions* of the National Register during 1956 contains details of accessions to 94 repositories, national and local.

A proposal was being considered to reconstitute the Historical Manuscripts Commission by introducing a clause in the Bill to recognise Public Record Office, which would give it impetus and prestige of statutory backing and enable it to continue, jointly with the British Records Association, its work on behalf of Private Archives.

British Records Association

The British Records Association completed twenty-five years of its existence in 1957. Its activities form part of the general movement of historical research during the past 25 years in England.

The Records Preservation Section of the British Records Association held the Annual General Meeting on 27 November 1956 with Sir Hilary Jenkinson in the chair. At the discussion meeting, *Theatrical Records* came up as a subject of interesting discussion. Great emphasis was placed on the need for publicity to convince theatre managements to preserve records of local theatre as otherwise it would result in a serious cultural loss to the nation.

The Records of Ecclesiastical Courts formed the topic of discussion at another meeting. The views expressed by various members centred round the powers of various courts, their procedure, and the custody and care of their records.

At yet another meeting, Sir Hilary Jenkinson opened the discussion on *the Cataloguing of Seals*. He drew the attention of the members to the existence of a large number of seals in almost all archives and the imperative need to repair, record and describe them in the interest of research. The value of seals as historical evidence was incontestable and their administrative significance self evident. According to him "the history of executive government in this country was largely the history of seals, and the discovery of a new seal could open a new chapter". In the discussion which followed, the principal points touched upon were the value of full description of seals, and the desirability of a uniform system of cataloguing.

The Annual General Meeting was presided over by the Master of the Rolls who spoke of the imminent retirement of Robert Somerville from the post of Honorary Secretary which he had held since 1947.

Anglo-American Conference of Historians

The sixth Anglo-American Conference of Historians was held at the Institute of Historical Research from 8 to 13 July 1957. Altogether 146 universities and other learned institutions nominated representatives. The total number of members was 758, including 169 from the United States of America and 51 from the Commonwealth countries. During the conference, 23 papers were read on early and medieval European, medieval English, modern European, modern British, Colonial, American, African and Asian history. The subjects of the three general meetings were "The bond of the Common Law", "Herodotus and the formation of modern Historiography" and "The role of the editor of historical documents in America".

Society of Indexers

At a meeting held at the headquarters of the National Book League, London, on 30 March 1957, a new Society of Indexers was founded with the following aims and objects: (a) to improve the standard of indexing and to secure some measure of uniformity in its technique; (b) to maintain panels of indexers in all fields from which authors, editors, publishers and other interested bodies may be furnished with suitable names on application; (c) to act as an advisory body on the qualification and remuneration of indexers; (d) to communicate or publish from time to time, books, papers, and notes on the subject of indexing; (e) to safeguard the interests of indexers.

The Society would look to the interests of all types of indexers including those concerned with unpublished material, geographical names, the central registries of large organizations, etc.

British Museum

The Trustees of the British Museum have decided to produce by means of photo-offset lithography, a complete edition of the British Museum Catalogue in 250-300 volumes within 5 or 6 years.

Notable deposits of manuscripts to the Museum arranged through the National Register of Archives were: the papers of

Spencer Perceval, Prime Minister (d. 1812), and papers of Colonel the Honourable George Napier (d. 1804), General Sir Charles James Napier, G.C.B. (d. 1853), and Sir George Thomas Napier (d. 1855).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

National Archives and Records Service

The National Archives recorded an increase of almost 24,500 cubic feet of records worthy of permanent preservation during 1957. Another 2,360 cubic feet were transferred to Federal records centres while 3,500 cubic feet were disposed of. A record set of some 1,10,000 printed maps of the Army Map Service and its predecessors, 1917-56, were accessioned. It is one of the biggest collections in the world of large-scale topographic maps and cover all regions. Other important accessions included files of the Department of State, 1930-39; microfilm copies of seized documents of the German Foreign Ministry, 1887-1933; and records relating to the trials held before the International Military Tribunal for the Far East and the United States Military Tribunals at Nuremberg.

There was a slight fall in the holdings of the 10 regional federal records centres in 1957 due to increased disposals. Holdings at the end of the year amounted to 31,86,000 cubic feet.

A bulletin entitled *The Appraisal of Modern Public Records* was published. In order to publicise desirable records management practices and standards, *Agency Mail Operations* was made available to all agencies in 1957. *Territorial Papers of the United States*, vol. XXII, relating to Florida Territory was also published.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

The manuscript holdings of the library reached the total of 7,105 cubic feet. The photographic collection was augmented by the addition of 1,445 new photographs.

The library's two-volume documentary publication, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Conservation, 1911-45*, made good progress. Another publication of note expected to be published shortly is a volume of *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs, 1933-37*.

National Historical Publication Commission

A guide to the depositories of archives and manuscripts in the United States is being published by the National Historical

Publication Commission. It will provide information about the holdings of some 1,300 depositories throughout the country. Other publications included in its programme are James Madison's papers and papers of Andrew Johnson. The publication of *Writings on American History* for each year, was continued.

Library of Congress

Southern Asia Accessions List is a monthly record of publications pertaining to Southern Asia currently accessioned by the Library of Congress and cooperating libraries. The *List* includes selected articles from periodicals in western languages and periodicals in the major vernacular languages of South Asia and South-east Asia published since January 1954.

The Library has received substantial additions to the papers of Senator George W. Norris—about 20,000 pieces dating from about 1885. Other acquisitions during the year include some 1,200 papers from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, of the Cuban Educational Association of America; 75,000 papers of "Fighting Joe" Wheeler, confederate Army Officer and U.S. Congressman from Alabama; about 15,000 papers of the late Chattanooga editor and author, George Fort Milton; papers of J. Franklin Jameson, the American historiographer, dating from 1867 to 1937 and some older material concerning attempts by British sugar planters and merchants in the West Indies to secure a revision of the Molasses Act, 1750-51.

ITALY

Riccardo Filangieri after 45 years of scholarly endeavour has retired from the post of Director of the Archivio di Stato at Naples and from the archival superintendency of Southern Italy.

CEYLON

As a result of a major administrative change the Department of archives was transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Local Government and Cultural Affairs.

Fifty Bays of specially manufactured Roneo Library shelving obtained from England were installed in the Archives for the better stacking of the Tombos and similar records.

A plan to publish a National Bibliography which is to include books printed in the Island as well as those produced abroad and periodicals and magazine articles having a bearing on Ceylon, is being worked out.

PHOTODUPLICATION AND MICROCOPYING

Microfilm Camera

A new low cost microfilm-copying camera has recently been developed by A. Seidell and H. F. Flemér. It consists of a base and a metal column with a movable cross arm by which the camera is supported. The upright metal column is attached to the rear of the base and its cross arm may be set at four numbered positions corresponding to areas of 9"×12" to 15"×22" to be photographed. The camera may be easily removed and replaced on the front face of the cross arm, in which is fixed the electric motor which operates the camera. The cycle of operation is 3 seconds, which allows up to 20 exposures per minute. Developing is done in a Morse daylight tank which will take film up to 100 ft. in length. The entire apparatus can be supported on 2×3 ft. table.

Portable Microfilm Reader

Micro Methods Ltd., London, have produced a V.C. Microfilm Reader which occupies a little more space than a typewriter. The image is projected on to the desk and there is no translucent screen to try the eyes. Either 16-mm. or 35-mm. film, perforated or unperforated, can be used.

BOOK REVIEWS

Eighteen Fifty-Seven by Surendra Nath Sen (Calcutta, 1957 ; pp. xxv+466 ; price Rs. 7.50 or 15 sh. or \$2 Library Edition and Rs. 5.50 or 10 sh. 6d. or \$1.50 Popular Edition).

The Sepoy Mutiny & Revolt of 1857 by R. C. Majumdar (Calcutta, 1957, pp. xviii+289 ; price Rs. 15).

In commissioning Dr. Sen to write a history of the outbreak of 1857, the object of the Government of India was to obtain a true and objective history of the struggle, not 'a partisan interpretation of the events'. This object has been most admirably fulfilled. Dr. Sen has written neither from the British nor the Indian point of view, but as a dispassionate historian. He has treated a highly controversial subject with cool detachment and given us a remarkably fair and unprejudiced account of 'Eighteen fifty-seven'. Dr. Majumdar's volume, though more polemical, is no less objective. Both books are fine examples of modern Indian scholarship.

Dr. Sen claims to have offered his readers only a 'review' of the struggle. This is rather a modest description of a book which does in fact give a fairly full account of the whole uprising. The causes both of the mutiny itself and of the popular outbreaks which followed it in parts of the country are explained quite fully and very ably, and there then follow detailed—perhaps in places too detailed—narratives of the events in the various centres of disturbance. Dr. Sen assumes that his readers will be already familiar with the main events and on this assumption deals separately from start to finish with the happenings in each of the principal theatres, e.g., Delhi, Kanpur, Oudh, Jhansi, the Punjab, etc. A reader for whom the assumption does not hold good may find that this mode of treatment makes it somewhat difficult to grasp the temporal and causal relationships between events in one area and those elsewhere. Thus chapter three gives an account of events in Delhi from the original outbreak on May 11th down to its recapture by the British and the surrender of Bahadur Shah in the following September. But it is not till chapter eight, 200 pages later, that the reader hears of the contemporary events in nearby Aligarh, Agra and Rohilkhand, and not till chapter nine that he is told of the prompt disarming of the Purbiah troops in the Punjab which enabled the British to recover Delhi with a force drawn

from and based upon that Province. Meanwhile, he has travelled in space to Kanpur, Lucknow, Bihar and back to Jhansi, Central India and Rajputana, and in time to June 1858 or even later.

The narrative is at times graphic and enthralling. The account of events in Delhi makes particularly good reading and is well-proportioned. On the other hand, too much space is given to the siege of Lucknow and to the experiences and feelings of individual Britishers waiting, almost despairingly, for relief.

Dr. Majumdar's volume is really a series of essays on various aspects of the mutiny and revolt of 1857 rather than a comprehensive history of the outbreak. A brief general outline of the main events is supplied—owing to the necessary compression of a complicated story into a short compass, this is the least readable part of the book—but most of it is devoted to discussion of the causes and character of the outbreak, the part played by the various "heroes", the atrocities committed by either side, the causes of failure and similar topics. Dr. Majumdar has written on these matters in a forthright and cogent manner and has effectively shattered the romantic idealisation of Bahadur Shah and Co. into heroes of a First War of Independence. His conclusions are much the same as those of Dr. Sen, but he has argued them in more detail. Both of them agree that there was no organised conspiracy either among the sepoys or among political leaders. They also agree that the outbreak was at first a purely military one and that it was not till some time later that the spirit of revolt showed itself among the civil population. Dr. Sen considers that "outside Oudh and Shahabad there is no evidence of that general sympathy which would invest the Mutiny with the dignity of a national war", while Dr. Majumdar asserts that the outbreak should be regarded "not as the first phase of the war of independence but as the last phase of India under Free Lances that existed since the fall of the Mughal power". "The miseries and bloodshed of 1857-58", he writes "were not the birth pang of a freedom movement in India but the dying groans of an obsolete aristocracy and centrifugal feudalism of the mediaeval age". Dr. Sen puts the same thing in different words. "The Mutiny leaders would have set the clock back, they would have done away with the new reforms, with the new order, and gone back to the good old days when a commoner could not expect equal justice with the noble, when the tenants were at the mercy of the talukdars, and when theft was punished with mutilation. In short, they

wanted a counter-revolution". It will be seen from these quotations that both of them take the orthodox view of the uprising which has been adopted by the majority of modern writers. Dr. Sen has, however, rightly pointed out that the rebels undoubtedly wanted to get rid of the alien Government and restore the old order of which the King of Delhi was the rightful representative and to this extent what began as a fight for religion ended as a war of independence. Though the conception of Indian nationality was yet in embryo, the unity of a common bondage had given the people of India a vague sense that in spite of racial, religious and linguistic difference, they had something in common as against the Englishmen.

Dr. Sen admits that most of the leaders of the movement were actuated by purely personal motives rather than by patriotism and this point is forcibly driven home by Dr. Majumdar who gives an excellent account of the parts played by the most prominent of the individual leaders. Though several of them showed at times heroic qualities, only Maulavi Ahmadullah Shah and perhaps Shahzada Firoz Shah can be regarded as true patriots. Certainly the former had no personal interest to serve and even before the sepoys mutinied had given evidence of his uncompromising hostility to the British. Though his patriotism had a distinctly Islamic colour and could not be exactly equated with patriotism today, there is no doubt that he was animated from the start by a sincere determination to drive the English infidels from the country.

The other leaders were all opportunists who took advantage of the apparent breakdown of British authority to further their own personal interests. Most of them had been in close and friendly contact with British officials right up to the eve of the sepoys' mutiny and their subsequent conduct was not free from the taint of bad faith. Bahadur Shah, the Nana Sahib and probably also the Rani of Jhansi, originally threw in their lot with the sepoys not wholly of their own free choice, but under some measure of compulsion. All three made obvious attempts to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. They can hardly be claimed as patriots. Even of the Rani of Jhansi, who showed some nobility of character and on the available evidence cannot be justly charged with the crimes which the British were inclined to attribute to her, Dr. Majumdar has written—very correctly—"nothing can be more erroneous than to associate her name with a struggle for independence, either of Jhansi or of India".

Among the "heroes", but 'relegated to the last in the list', Dr. Majumdar has included the sepoys themselves. The few pages in which he reviews the part which they played are first rate, but not very complimentary to them. He points out that not a single leader of any note was thrown up from their ranks and ends by observing as a very significant fact "that all the contemporary accounts by the Indians represent the actual sepoys as very different from the idealised picture of brave patriots fighting for their country's freedom which has been drawn by misplaced sentiments of a later age'.

The outbreak of 1857 is a memorable episode in Indian history and will continue to excite the interest of both Indians and Englishmen for many years to come. It is, however, an episode in which neither Englishmen nor Indians can take much pride. In the main the story is one of deplorable bungling, bad faith and inhumanity on both sides. Dr. Majumdar has drawn attention to the absence of any noble ideal or inspiration behind the movement. The lofty sentiments of patriotism and nationalism with which the sepoys and the political leaders are some times credited had little, if any, basis in fact. As Dr. Majumdar points out, "such ideas were not yet familiar to Indian minds". The absence of noble inspiration was no doubt one of the reasons for the failure of the outbreak. The British on the other hand "were inspired by the patriotic zeal for retaining their empire and profoundly moved by the spirit of revenge against the Indians who had murdered their women and children. The detailed accounts of the victories of British troops against enormous odds and their readiness to put up with incredible hardships and sufferings, fully bear out their strength of resolve, fine sense of fellow-feeling and a patriotic urge to do their best to save the honour of their country. It is true that we do not possess any similar accounts of the Indian side, and comparison is therefore unjust, but the facts known so far certainly are not in favour of crediting the Indians with similar virtues".

A spirit of revenge is not a very commendable motive force. Patriotic zeal has a higher value and British patriotism was at this time reinforced in many instances by strong religious feeling. The evangelical ferment which stirred British life in the first half of the 19th century was not without effect on some of the British who came to India, and while this may have been one of the causes of the mutiny, by giving the impression that the English intended to christianise the whole country, it was certainly a powerful factor in its suppression. Many Englishmen

sincerely believed that they had a divine mission in India and that Providence watched over them in their struggle against seemingly overwhelming odds. This spirit can be seen at its best in Havelock, at its worst in Neill. To a more sceptical age belief in a divine mission may appear to be as irrational as the sepoys' superstitions, but in practice it could far more effectively than they—

“Deliberate valour breathe, firm and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat”.

Dr. Sen and Dr. Majumdar in writing on this controversial subject have attained a high level of objectivity despite all the seductions of nationalist mythology. In his preface Dr. Majumdar has given an amusing account of his encounter with a certain politician whose idea of how to write history was nothing more nor less than to collect—or, if necessary, manufacture—only such facts as would support his own point of view. Dr. Sen, on the other hand, has testified to the liberal attitude of the Government of India who conceded him complete freedom to state his conclusions fully and frankly without any fear of official interference. This is all the more notable in that his conclusions are perhaps hardly in consonance with the views generally held by political party which holds the reins of Government. It is regrettable, therefore, that the sober well-balanced Foreword which Maulana A. K. Azad has contributed to Dr. Sen's volume should contain one rather noticeable departure from facts in deference to a preconceived theory. The Maulana writes that during the whole of the mutiny there was not “a single instance where there was a clash or conflict on a communal basis” and goes on to draw from this premise the scarcely legitimate inference that “before the days of British rule there was no such thing as the Hindu-Muslim problem in India”. The premise itself, however, cannot be squared with certain facts regarding communal tension and conflict during the mutiny set forth by Dr. Majumdar to some of which Dr. Sen also alludes. In Delhi, even when its siege by the British was imminent, communal relations were strained, and communal conflict led to ugly disturbances in Bareilly, Bijnor and other parts of Rohilkhand. It may also be noted that the Sikhs as a whole actively sided with the British and opposed a movement which appeared to aim at the restoration of Muslim rule.

In support of his view of unbroken Hindu-Muslim unanimity, the Maulana cites the fact that the first cry of the mutineers at Meerut was ‘March to Delhi’. This, he says, “was not the

result of debates or discussion but the spontaneous reaction of the common soldier". On page 63 of his book, Dr. Sen gives a distinctly different account of the matter.

The British, no doubt, exploited Hindu-Muslim divisions, but they did not create them; and it is, to say the least, doubtful whether even the most far-sighted statesmanship could have permanently united all Hindus and Muslims of the country into a single polity under British form of democracy. It is of some significance that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who was the first to proclaim the impossibility of Hindus and Muslims sharing the throne which the British would one day vacate, had experienced during the mutiny in his own person at Bijnor the Hindu-Muslim dissensions which resulted from a temporary Swaraj. These experiences perhaps contributed to his becoming, not an apostle of Hindu-Muslim amity, but the earliest prophet of Pakistan.

PENDEREL MOON

The Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin, 1926-1931 by S. Gopal (Oxford, 1957, pp. 152; price 21s).

"The Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin," by Dr. S. Gopal, is a remarkable work by one of our gifted historians. The author has already established his mark in historical writing by his work on the "Permanent Settlement of Bengal" and an excellent study on "the Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon", published like the present work, by the Oxford University Press. In a sense, the present work on Lord Irwin's period of office is a culmination of Dr. Gopal's earlier researches which gave him an unusual insight into the character of British rule in India, its mistakes and drawbacks as well as the generous impulses and enlightened policies which influenced the course of events and went into the making of one of the most significant impacts between peoples, cultures and diverse systems of social organization.

The five years from 1926 to 1931, during which Edward Wood, first Baron Irwin of Kirby-under-Dale in the County of York, served as Viceroy of India, were a fateful time in the evolution of Indo-British relations. From the narrow standpoint of government and administration, the Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin is a fascinating period for the study of events and policies which developed out of the immediate past and determined the future setting of the most unusual and dramatic settlement of the political problem between Great Britain and India. From the wider angle of human history, with its profound interactions and conflicts in the realm of ideas and beliefs, this brief period

illustrated the fundamental clash between East and West, revealing at the same time the methods and forces which pointed towards a deeper reconciliation and synthesis. Both these aspects, the surface of events which appeared to move with their own logic and limitation, and the deeper forces which offered fateful choices to leaders and statesmen, are vividly brought out in Dr. Gopal's study, which is really a brilliant essay in historical thinking about recent events, forces and personalities, the memory of which is still so fresh in our minds.

Barely a quarter of a century lies between the present moment and the time of Lord Irwin's leaving the shores of India after completing his tenure of office as the King-Emperor's representative and the *de facto* ruler of the Indian Empire of Great Britain. Yet the change in this short span of time has been so great and the scene of life so radically transformed, that it has been possible for Dr. Gopal to write his history with that calm reflection and cool detachment which are seldom manifested by those who write about recent times. This has also been possible because of the way in which the great change in the relationship between India and Great Britain was effected.

When Lord Irwin took his appointment as Viceroy, somewhat reluctantly, in 1926, it was still the old world of the aftermath of the First World War. The War had caused many eruptions and new revolutionary forces had been released in Europe and in Asia. But the extent and the strength of these changes were still unknown and among the victors there was a natural desire to restore and re-establish the old order. The Imperial Powers of the Western World tightened their grip on their colonial empires in Asia and Africa and British rule in India was no exception to this trend. The Khilafat agitation, the non-co-operation movement and the terrorist activities against foreign rulers troubled the government and the feeling of nationalism was clearly becoming more widespread among the Indian people. But there was no serious danger of a violent upheaval and the British Power was confident of its strength in India. The governmental machinery was loyal and efficient and the army could be completely relied upon. The animosity between the Hindus and the Muslims appeared to be stronger than national opposition to foreign rule. The rural country-side was neither politically conscious nor literate, and feudal conditions prevailed in the princely states ruled by autocrats.

By the time Lord Irwin completed his term of office, great changes had taken place and the country had advanced far

beyond the post-war stage in regard to political consciousness and nationalism. Within the range of a short volume of no more than 140 pages, Dr. Gopal has described the highlights of Lord Irwin's Viceroyalty with a remarkable economy of words and obvious mastery of detail. The seven chapters of the book read like the acts of a play which sustains our interest by the unity of its theme and the breadth of its treatment. The actors in the drama and the significant incidents are brilliantly assessed and the selection of material shows the author's complete familiarity with the primary sources of evidence and with the historian's craft at its best. The sense of perspective and the selection of material deserve particular mention.

The central theme of the drama of Lord Irwin's Viceroyalty is Mahatma Gandhi's Civil Disobedience Movement and the Viceroy's reaction and response to this novel challenge to authority. To this fascinating struggle, the author relates very successfully other important aspects of the Viceroyalty, such as communal disharmony, working of parliamentary institutions, efforts at constitutional reforms, the political consciousness of the educated middle class, the awakening of the peasantry and the politics of the princely states. The description and appraisal of the Civil Disobedience campaign, culminating in Gandhi's defiance of the Salt Laws and the famous march through his homeland of Gujerat to the sea beach at Dundi, are done in a masterly fashion. This picturesque event baffles the Government of India and its true significance is not easily realized by the Viceroy and his civil servants who ruled over the country. The scene at Dandi sent a thrill of elation among all nationalists in the country and its effect on world opinion was impressive.

Dr. Gopal's work on the Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin leaves on the reader's mind a keen consciousness of the fundamental battle of principles between India and Britain, as embodied in the powerful personalities of Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin. To Gandhi, British rule in India was the personification of brute force and the Government wielding this force was evil and satanic ; but the Mahatma had strong faith in the character and traditions of the British people and, therefore, believed that the struggle could be resolved on the moral and ethical plane, and through non-violent means. Lord Irwin believed in the civilizing mission of Britain and the duty which the rulers owed to the ruled ; he respected the desire for freedom and the sentiment of nationalism among Indians, but did not understand the true character of Gandhi's movement and the Mahatma himself was

at first an enigma to him. The practical difficulties in the way of self-government at an early date seemed very real to the Viceroy and were magnified by British civilians in India and by the Conservative Party at Westminster. The communal disunity, the problem of the princely states, and considerations of military defence loomed large in the arguments of those who opposed the nationalist claim for immediate fulfilment of the goal of self-government.

On the timing of the grant of self-determination to India and the details of political and constitutional settlement, controversy continued to rage, and the endless debate between the two parties proved sterile; but in the realm of fundamental values and the approach to the solution of the Indo-British problem, Irwin's Viceroyalty proved to be decisive and could be viewed as the harbinger of the historic settlement to be consummated in 1947. When the 'naked fakir' who talked sedition according to the wooden bureaucrats at Delhi and at Whitehall sipped tea with the Viceroy in a frank exchange of ideas, it signified that both adversaries had recognized the overriding value of reason, right, and goodwill in bringing about the fulfilment of freedom and democracy—in which both sides believed fundamentally and intensely. Much water had to flow down the course of history in India, in Britain and in the world at large before Indian independence became a reality, but the fundamental meeting of minds and hearts had already taken place in the time of Lord Irwin and the rest followed as a matter of course.

The Viceroy touched the roots of the problem when he wrote as follows to a friend in May 1926 :

"I am always racking my brain as to how to get out of this futile and vicious circle by which we say, no advance without cooperation, and they say no cooperation without advance. I cannot help feeling that it is a question much more psychological than political. One of the extreme Swaraj people said to me the other day that if only they could trust us it wouldn't matter to them whether they waited five or fifty years. How then to make them believe that we mean what we say?"

Three years later Lord Irwin could answer his question as follows during the course of an address to the Legislative Assembly :

"If there are Indians who are tempted to mistrust Great Britain, there are no doubt many in Great Britain, resentful of what they well know to be an unfounded and ungenerous

accusation, who may mistrust some of those who speak for India. But if we are thus tempted in the twentieth century, I know that both India and Great Britain will be judged in the twenty-first by the degree to which they have refused to lose faith in one another."

The need for trust and faith in each other was recognized by the Mahatma and the Viceroy, and the way this basic agreement was achieved is the burden of Dr. Gopal's excellent work. No student of modern Indian history and politics can afford to neglect this book, and we hope that the author will follow up this book by a more comprehensive work on Indian history during the period of the British connection. Dr. Gopal is eminently fitted to undertake such a task.

PREM KIRPAL

Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies 1857-1859 by S. B. Chaudhury (Calcutta, 1957; pp. xxiii+367; price Rs. 15 or 20s.).

The school text-books that we learnt in our younger days taught us that the disturbances which took place in 1857 were only an ill-advised and shortlived mutiny confined almost entirely to the sepoys of the Indian Army. The revolt, we were told, was the result of a stupid misunderstanding about some new cartridges which had been issued out to the sepoys. False rumours were spread that the cartridges were greased with fat, extracted from the flesh of cows and pigs, and as before firing, the top of the cartridge had to be ripped away by teeth, the use of the new ammunition was against the religious tenets of both Hindus and Muslims. The history books went on to say that the cartridges were quickly withdrawn, and the mutiny was soon put down.

Even some contemporary accounts supported this version and, in particular, William Muir, Secretary to the Government of North-West Provinces, firmly asserted that the revolt of 1857 was nothing more than a mutiny of troops. Later, Holmes, who wrote a history of the Sepoy Mutiny, expressed the same view. This was the picture presented to all school children. It was not a true picture, but the British rulers could not afford to tell the truth and hand out to growing minds information which might act as a germ of discontent and potential rebellion by reminding them of past events. How could they tell young and impressionable Indians that their ancestors had rebelled against the foreign yoke and made a country-wide move to shake it off,

without running the risk that the truth, if told in this manner, might incite their subjects to repeat history with perhaps greater success?

But this state of affairs could not persist for ever. Contemporary accounts of what had taken place in the terrible period 1857-59 were available in official records and documents, prepared by British civil officers who had held charge of the district civil administration during the relevant time. The curious who studied these records began to talk. One of the first to publish an unorthodox account of the mutiny was Edward Thompson, who in his *The Other Side of the Medal*, spoke of the atrocities committed by the British during the so-called mutiny. His book showed that the horrible cruelties which had hitherto been attributed to Indians alone were more than matched by the reprisals perpetrated by the British. Further researches revealed a state of affairs which was quite different to what we had been taught in the history books. It came out that the reprisals had not only been bitter but very extensive. The counter-measures continued after the mutiny or the rebellion, as it now began to be called, had been completely quelled. Bitterness remained on both sides. Those who had helped the British received large awards. During the rebellion itself the Indians had displayed a determination to tear the English out of the land, destroy everything that would remind them of their British rulers. Telegraph posts were dug out, police stations and tahsil buildings were burnt down. Railway lines were ripped off the track. Railway engines were battered and destroyed. Even milestones were defaced. Europeans were massacred at various places and these massacres were witnessed by large crowds of people. No wonder the British determined to strike terror into those who had rebelled against them, and the counter-measures consisted of burning down of whole tracts of inhabited country-side, wholesale burning of villages, and revenge was carried to the extent of extermination in some cases. There was wholesale emigration of Indians and nearly a lac of them went out to Mauritius.

During the rebellion itself there were countless instances of courage and selfless spirit displayed by the rebels. They did not crave for their life. Villagers refused to betray the rebel leaders. British punitive forces were misled. One officer reported that there were spies everywhere. He said:

“As with the detectives of Vidocq, there were spies in the market-place, at the festival, in the places of worship, in

the gaols, in the hospitals, in the regimental bazars, among the casual knot of gossipers, among the bathers at the tanks, among the village circle round the well, under the big tree, among the stone breakers of the high-ways”.

There was no doubt at all that the disturbance was not confined to the army, and the civil population took it up very quickly. The financial position of the East India Company became desperate. The value of public securities fell. Indians ceased to give credit to Europeans. Money was withdrawn from banks, education stopped and civil administration came to a standstill. In many districts a rebel government was set up and this worked efficiently. The Rani of Jhansi, for instance, proved to be a most efficient ruler. The truth is that the civil rebellion was a challenge to the British system of law and revenue, and this challenge was met by the entire Indian people. Indeed, the British came within an age of losing India. One of the most surprising features of the rebellion was that low caste people displayed the most marked hostility towards the British, although they had always been pampered by the Government.

It was essential that an authoritative and detailed history of the rebellion should be available to the layman as well as the student of history. Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri, the author of *Civil Disturbances during the British Rule in India (1765-1857)*, has provided such an account in his book *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies (1857-1859)*. The work is based almost entirely on information gleaned from “Government records, the ‘Narratives’ of British Civil Officers who held charge of districts in those fateful years, the voluminous records of British legislation, the Parliamentary Papers, the string of reports, minutes, despatches and memoranda”, etc. As the author very aptly remarks in his preface, the limitation with regard to sources which he imposed upon himself adds to the value of the book, because the British officers would not be guilty of overstatement as regards the nature and the extent of the rebellion. The author after giving the general historical background of the rebellion has narrated the events of the rebellion in a number of chapters each of which deals with a particular area. The most important of these is chapter II, dealing with “Upper India” where the rebellion was more violent and more widespread than in the other parts of India. It was here that the true nature of the rebellion was seen to be a civil revolt against the Government rather than a mutiny of the Indian Army. It

is no doubt true that the ball was set rolling by the army, but the cue was quickly taken up by the civil population, and a determined effort was made to oust the British rule and revert to the government of the erstwhile kings and rulers. There is no doubt that this was not an attempt to bring democratic government to the people of India. The leaders were the old rulers who had been ousted by the British and who wanted to come back into their own once again, but they had the backing of their old subjects.

"In Lucknow it was the war of the people of all classes. They fought from street to street, from house to house, and the work of destruction and butchery went on for several days till Lucknow was finally conquered on 21st March."

The general conclusion of the author is stated in his sixth chapter "Theories on the Indian Mutiny".

"That the sepoys struck the first blow is not denied, that their grievances flowed independently of any external pressure and originated from the conditions of the existing military service also appear quite probable. But their apprehensions and fears about the intentions of the British to destroy their caste and religion were exactly those which troubled the minds of the civil population and the feudal aristocracy as well. This connects the two aspects of the revolt in the historical process. When the sepoys had created the field and attained a certain measure of success, sections of the aristocracy and certain civil elements put themselves at the head of the movement, with the result that the military complexion of the insurrection was changed."

The book will be read with interest by students of history as well as laymen. It contains a great deal of information, and to say that, at times, it makes difficult reading is not to understate its merits. One is naturally reminded of Louis Madelin's *French Revolution* when reading a book of this type. Madelin's book is so full of human interest that it grips the attention like a detective story. Dr. Chaudhuri's book reminds one of a thesis written for the degree of Doctorate.

The book contains an appendix, giving some of the material upon which the text is based, a full bibliography and an adequate index.

Bibliography of Mauritius, 1502-1954 by A. Toussaint, Chief Archivist of Mauritius (Port Louis, Mauritius, 1956; pp. xvii+884).

The dream of the Mauritius Archives to publish a comprehensive bibliography of every relevant material—printed, manuscript and cartographic—with particular leaning for historical needs, has become a reality with the publication of this volume which runs into over 900 pages of closely printed matter. It covers not only the island of Mauritius but also its dependencies which include Rodrigues and the Oil Islands from 1502 to the end of 1954, whether available in Mauritius itself or in other countries.

The scope of the volume has been considerably widened by including in it not only the printed matter but also the 'Archivalia' and cartographic material which do not normally form part of the bibliographies of the usual type. This has made the bibliography a regular manual of documentation and a standard guide for the whereabouts of primary and secondary sources of material for the research scholars.

In its chequered political career, Mauritius, "The Star and Key of the Indian Ocean", has changed hands thrice. It was held successively by the Dutch from 1638 to 1710, by the French from 1715 to 1810 and by the British from 1810 to the present day. The paper accumulations of its long and fascinating history, particularly from 1721 onwards, which are now with its present administrators have been faithfully recorded in the bibliography. Further, there seems to be a great deal more of its history available in other countries—France and Great Britain for the 18th century and the Netherlands, South Africa and Indonesia for the 17th century. This explains why the archives and books relating to different periods are listed in different languages depending on who ruled the country then.

The extensive coverage of the bibliography has obliged the compilers to divide the material under the following six convenient groups or sections:

- (a) Early imprints and private publications issued in Mauritius from the introduction of printing in 1768 down to the end of 1954;
- (b) Periodicals, newspapers and serials issued in Mauritius from 1773 to 1954;
- (c) Government and semi-official publications issued in Mauritius and Great Britain from the beginning of British rule in 1810 to 1954;

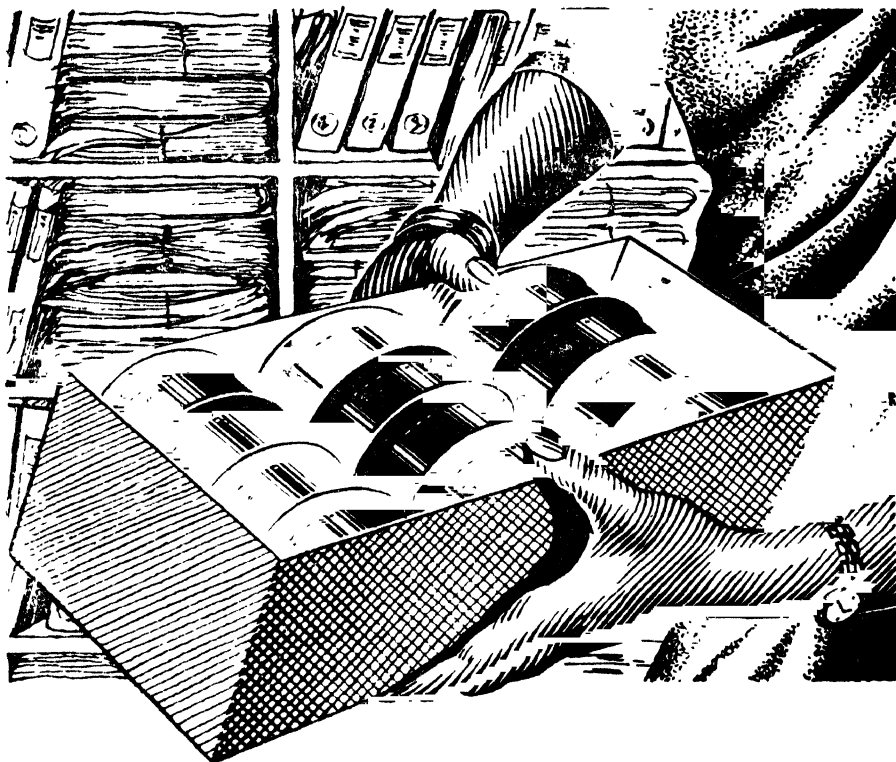
- (d) Publications relative to Mauritius issued abroad in English, French, Dutch and other languages from 1600 to 1954 ;
- (e) Manuscripts and archivalia of Mauritian interest available in Mauritius and in other countries from 1598 to 1954 ;
- (f) Cartographic material from 1502 to 1954 including general and regional maps and plans of Mauritius and its dependencies, nautical charts of the South West Indian Ocean and early world maps showing the Mascarene Islands.

A word about the arrangement of entries in each group. The 8,865 entries are serially numbered in separate sequences of each group and follow either a chronological or an alphabetical order depending on the ease with which they could be arranged thus.

The book ends with a very useful index without which it would have been impossible to derive optimum advantage.

The hope of the compilers that the reference medium offered in the shape of the first standard bibliography may stimulate students in Mauritius and abroad to produce works of genuine scholarship on the many facets of Mauritian history, life and industry, etc., is not expected to remain unfulfilled for long.

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The letters to and from the Court of Directors in this volume roughly cover five years from 1796 to 1800. The period includes the last two years of Sir John Shore's administration and the first three years of Lord Wellesley's Governor-Generalship. To the student of political history the closing years of the eighteenth century are of unusual interest, but political events do not form the subject-matter of the letters reproduced here as this correspondence belongs to the public series of the Home Department. Though passing references to political happenings are occasionally made, these letters are mainly concerned with the trade and commerce of the East India Company, management of the Company's business in distant centres like Basra and Fort Marlborough, means of collecting information about the history, topography and literature of the country, and details about the Company's administration.

There are also references to measures for the spiritual welfare of the people, indicating that the Company was not indifferent to its task of moral uplift of Englishmen abroad, including its own servants.

The Editor has made a very useful survey of events in the introduction. The notes make the understanding of the text easily intelligible while the bibliography provides a list of further readings on the period. The volume has several well chosen illustrations and an exhaustive index.

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Vol. X, 1792-93

EDITED BY

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This volume, published by the National Archives of India, New Delhi in 1959, is number X in the series entitled *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*. It embodies English summaries of 2,002 Persian letters that passed between the Governor General, Residents and other agents of the East India Company on the one hand, and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II and other Indian rulers, chiefs and notables on the other during the period 1792-93 A.D. It thus covers the last two eventful years of the administration of Lord Cornwallis which among other events witnessed termination of the Third Anglo-Mysore War, reduction of some of the Rajput States by Mahadji Sindhia and subordination of the Rajas of Travancore and Tanjore and also of the Nawab of Arcot.

The correspondence contained in the volume unfolds one of the most dramatic and interesting chapters of British Indian history and vividly reveals that the Indian scene at the time was dominated by political unrest, economic exploitation and social disorder. In the south, though war with Tipu Sultan had ended with the treaty of Seringapatam, bickerings on the interpretation of its terms continued. Tipu was friendly to the English, but the controversy over Kurnool marred his relations with the Nizam. In order to make up for the deficiency caused in the Company's finances due to the war with Tipu, the English assumed the administration of the Carnatic, much against the wishes of Nawab Muhammad Ali Walajah.

In northern India, the decrepit Mughal Empire was in its last throes, the political scene being dominated by Mahadji Sindhia.

The correspondence also affords evidence that the East India Company tried to maintain cordial relations with neighbouring

states and foreign countries, noteworthy among them being Pegu, Nepal, Bhutan, Assam, Afghanistan, Muscat and Trengganu.

Apart from acquiring political predominance in India the East India Company continued to establish its trade and commerce. Pepper was obtained from Travancore and exported from the Anjengo Port. Ready-made indigo was purchased for the Company's investment. Trade in saltpetre was brisk. Salt was manufactured at Arcot and Jalamuta. Commodities like rice, pepper and sugar were exported to Muscat, etc.

The letters also reveal that bankers had their established firms in all important places of the country. In order to relieve the ryots from undue exploitation of the *mahajans* and money-lenders, Lord Cornwallis issued his famous proclamation announcing the permanency of the land settlement in Bengal.

The correspondence also affords interesting glimpses of some of the social customs prevalent during the period. It reveals that the Nawabs and Rajas led lazy, luxurious and incontinent lives and had large establishments of servants. We further learn that harmonious relations existed between the Hindus and the Muslims, who held responsible positions under the Indian rulers and chiefs.

The volume contains an informative and scholarly introduction, besides notes, bibliography and index which considerably add to the value of the publication.

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